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COVER ILLUSTRATION

*Naval Engagement Between the US Frigate Constitution
and HMS Frigate Java, 29 December 1812*

Montardier [French, active 1814–1823]. Watercolor on paper. Signed
“Montardier du havre de grace.”

The US Frigate *Constitution*, under command of William Bainbridge, engaged and defeated the British frigate *Java* thirty miles off the coast of Brazil. The two vessels were relatively equally matched and the engagement lasted nearly two hours.

Little is known of the artist Montardier beyond what information accompanies the signatures on his paintings.

Peabody Essex Museum Collection
Photo by Mark Sexton

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Editor-in-Chief's Note

What are we using to “light the lamps” of maritime history in the 1990s? Over time the fuel of illumination for lights as aids to navigation has changed. A lighthouse at Sigeum (the present Cape Inchisari) near Troy dating to the seventh century BC had a brazier in which wood was burned. So did the Pharos of Alexandria in Egypt during the third century BC. Coal eventually supplanted wood. Oil lights reflected by parabolic mirrors came into use at the close of the eighteenth century. Electric light in the nineteenth century changed the means of illumination yet again.

What in maritime history fuels our energies? Is it curiosity, or antiquarian taste, or scholarly demands, or maybe something quite intangible. I read recently, near Maine summer tidewater, that a man seeks to live closer to water as he grows in age. A truism? Perhaps. If true, our quest to know more about the restless motion of oceans and rivers — and of those who cross waters for peaceful and warlike purposes — may be more engendered at later stages of life. Then again, I first read about the pursuit of the *Bismarck* when I was a lad, when the story was quite fresh, in fact, and, I could not put down any book that told of Magellan's feats or Drake's derring-do. Nowadays, my younger sons consume “Star Wars.” They are sailors too, but any knowledge of nautical history or navigation they get quite vicariously. I live in hope.

At a recent lobster feed beside the Kennebec River, I asked two confidants whether the lure of the age of the great schooners and square riggers would still fascinate readers fifty years hence. Would readers still know of Frederick William Wallace, Basil Lubbock, or Alan Villiers? How much does romance fuel maritime history? And that question invites another: are we running out of romance?

Alas, I could not evoke a satisfying response.

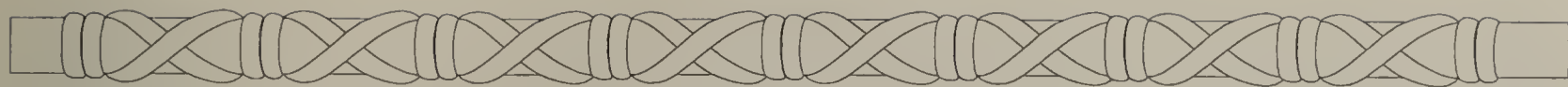
This issue of *The American Neptune* is not about romance specifically. There is enough here for broad ranging interest and specific inquiry. American trade to Asia, always closely followed in our pages, is greatly enriched by Mary Gallagher's insights and research, and by the illustrated discussion of financing the first voyage to China.

We are pleased to help celebrate the *Constitution*'s birthday with Commander Tyrone Martin's discussion of the events leading up to the construction of the 44-gun frigates. He credits technical innovation to Joshua Humphreys, who saw need for ships which could overpower those of their own class, and out-manuever those of greater power. It might be argued that “Old Ironsides” got her name because Humphreys called for scantlings (hull strength) of a 74-gun battleship in a 44-gun frigate. He also called for diagonal riders as the method needed to support fine ends in long, heavy ships. The fine ends provide superior speed and maneuverability. The *Constitution* sails today because, among other things, Humphreys' diagonal riders were reinstalled during the recent rebuilding program, with the result that hogging (sagging of the bow and stern) was almost totally eliminated.

Other articles, including Robert Erwin Johnson's memoir, and various reviews and notes complete the issue.

Please tell friends and acquaintances about what we are doing. We aim for enhancing the vitality of maritime history and arts — but at no cost to learned inquiry and scholarly contribution. We are known as a premier journal of maritime history, and we continue to welcome your advice and favor.

BARRY GOUGH



Charting a New Course for the China Trade: The Late Eighteenth Century American Model

MARY A. Y. GALLAGHER

The history of direct trade between the United States and China extends more than two hundred years. Philip Chadwick Foster Smith's *The Empress of China*, the most comprehensive study of the first American voyage to Canton, formed an important part of its bicentennial celebration in 1984. Where other historians of the North American China trade have produced overviews, reconstructed later voyages, or studied how the trade developed in different regions,¹ this article studies the patterns and events which shaped it from 1760 to 1790.

Independence brought with it economic hardship. The war destroyed assets and disrupted production. Specie was drained to pay for foreign imports. After the peace in 1783, Britain, France, and Spain imposed significant restrictions on American trade with their West Indian possessions, wrenching American commerce from its regular channels and forcing it to strike out in new directions. The *Empress* venture, a bold response to this crisis, was a signal triumph. It was also, however, a noteworthy failure; *Empress'* owners proved unable to establish a concern which would dominate the trade as did the European East India companies. After this initial attempt, Americans improvised a very successful small private enterprise model, snubbed their noses at established conventions, and developed the China trade into "the quintes-

sential business innovation of the 1780s" which led inexorably to continental and extra-continental expansion.²

North American entrepreneurs habitually defied the British East India Company monopoly of trade with China and India before the colonies declared their independence. A centuries-old tradition called "captain's privilege" gave naval officers a certain amount of cargo space to transport goods on private account — officers of East India Company vessels were generally allowed a privilege of about sixty tons of merchandise per voyage. American vessels met homebound Indiamen off the African coast, purchased East Asian products shipped by their officers, and brought them directly to America. They also smuggled East India contraband through St. Eustacia in the Dutch West Indies. These activities produced a pool of Americans with interest and some degree of experience in the procurement of East India goods. Robert Morris, half-owner of the *Empress'* maiden voyage, was one of the "main" tea smugglers operating out of Philadelphia. After 1776, war disrupted these practices.

Congress vacillated about its priorities with respect to East Asia. In September 1777, the Foreign Affairs Committee considered sending



The *Empress of China* in the South China Sea, 1784. Gouache painting by Philip Foster Chadwick Smith of Bath, Maine.

naval vessels to “intercept” British ships and to upset the “internal Trade of India.” Some far thinking delegates wondered whether France would allow American ships to put in at her islands in the Indian Ocean off the eastern coast of Africa. In 1779, Congress decided to allow its ministers to cede the right to trade in the East

Indies in peace negotiations if the United States was adequately compensated; this was later reversed. In 1780, unnamed entrepreneurs asked François Barbé-Marbois, French consul in Philadelphia, whether American vessels could use Mauritius (Île de France), and Réunion (Île de Bourbon), as ports of call on voyages to East

Asia. The request was most likely made by the future owners of the *Empress*. After the war, the application was renewed, and France granted American vessels access to Mauritius.³

War did not destroy the American taste for tea. On the contrary, it opened a burgeoning market which encouraged entrepreneurs in both the United States and France to plan for direct trade with East Asia, and to take initiatives to procure foreign assistance to ensure the viability of their ventures. French trade with the East Indies had reached a watershed in 1769, when the French East India Company was dissolved. Some French commercial and financial interests quickly petitioned the government to reestablish it. They argued that individuals could not trade profitably with East Asia, free trade could not adequately supply the French market with Asian merchandise, and French firms which engaged in it would merely become fronts for foreigners. It was not clear, however, that the government would comply or to whom it might grant a new monopoly. This situation, combined with the war against Britain, created a window of opportunity for private ventures to Asia by French entrepreneurs and suggested the possibility of joint ventures with Americans.

Immediately after the war, the French government sponsored an expedition to China. On 2 February 1783, it authorized Grandclos-Meslé, a merchant from Saint-Malo associated with the former East India Company, to outfit four ships on the King's account. Shortly after, the crown attempted to broaden the base of the trade by forming an East India association of merchant-shareholders from six French ports (Marseilles, Bordeaux, Nantes, Saint-Malo, Lorient, and Le Havre). On 21 July 1783, it empowered this association to finance and outfit an expedition of three ships (*Triton*, *Sagittaire*, and *Provence*), which the king supplied. One of the merchants most eager to participate was Thomas-Simon Bérard of Marseilles, who, with a group of friends, attempted to dominate the venture by purchasing a majority of the shares allotted to Marseilles. When the government responded to

their attempted takeover by limiting the number of shares each individual could buy, Bérard and his confederates tried to kill the project by withdrawing their support. Enough capital was raised without them to send the three ships to China in February 1784.

These two incidents convinced the French government that its objectives — an adequate supply of Asian goods, reestablishment of French power in India, and a working relationship with more entrepreneurial financial interests — could be achieved only through a new East Indies Company. This company, established in April 1785 and financed by the sale of stock, allowed the Bérards a major role, absorbed French resources, and put an end to incentives for French-American joint ventures.⁴

Among those who had been interested in a French-supported American venture to China was John Holker, Jr., the son of an emigré Englishman now prospering in Rouen. Holker and his father were politically connected with French Foreign Minister Vergennes, whose determination to use trade to gain leverage over foreign rivals led him to play an active role in the ministerial struggle to determine what form the new East India Company would take. The young Holker had come to America in 1778, where he served as agent of the French Marine and consul general at Philadelphia. He also engaged in private business on his own behalf and for a number of prestigious French clients, including the Paris banking firms of Le Couteulx and Company and Sabatier fils et Desprez, whose principals were interested in entering into the East Indies trade.

Soon after his arrival in Philadelphia, Holker established a close business relationship with Robert Morris, a leading local merchant and former member of Congress, who, as the dominant member of its Secret Committee of Trade, had managed many of its foreign procurement operations. In February 1781, Congress chose Morris to serve as Superintendent of Finance and appointed him to serve concurrently as Agent of Marine later that year. The combined appointments gave him control over all matters related

to the public debt and expenditures, treasury and naval personnel, public vessels, naval stores, and prizes. Holker, however, had been forced to resign from all his public offices in September 1781 because he was so heavily involved in private trade.⁵

Holker and William Duer, a New York businessman and politician, had discussed a China voyage with Morris in the fall of 1780, but Morris was not convinced that adequate resources were at hand. In the fall of 1781, Holker began actively planning a China voyage designed to take advantage of the wartime shortage of East Indies goods in the United States. He again tried to persuade Morris to participate. He also involved Matthew Ridley, a Baltimore merchant associated with both Morris and Holker.

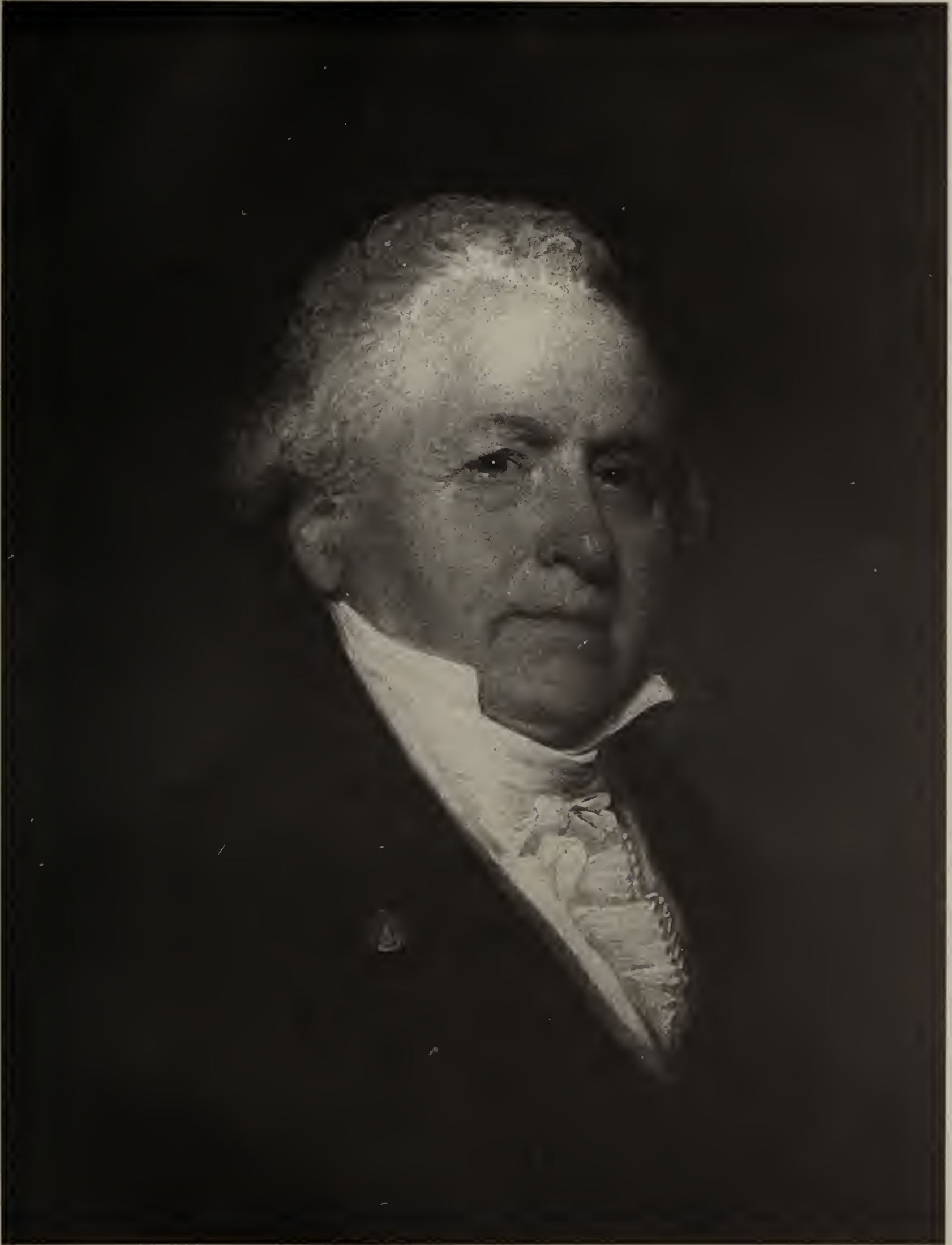
Ridley left for France in October 1781 to negotiate loans and purchase supplies for Maryland. His carefully guarded letters to his partner, Mark Pringle, and Holker reveal that he was engaged in developing some important commercial prospects, including European support for the China venture. Ridley contacted both Sabatier and Desprez and the principals of Le Cou-teulx and Company of Paris, with whom Morris conducted both private and public business. Jacques, Louis and Laurent Le Couteulx and Company, the latter firm's Cádiz branch, had close ties with the Bank of San Carlos, repository of the specie sent to Spain from America. Since silver was an important cargo component in most outbound China voyages, this connection was potentially very significant.⁶

Peace negotiations between the United States and Great Britain began in April 1782. Their success or failure was of critical importance to the nature and success of any commercial plans, especially for a China venture. Ridley, who was negotiating a loan for Maryland in Holland, was convinced by June that the time for a wartime China venture had already past. He predicted, however, that when peace came, American commerce would be much extended and that the first who settled "there" would realize very great advantages. By October, Ridley was back in Paris and in contact with

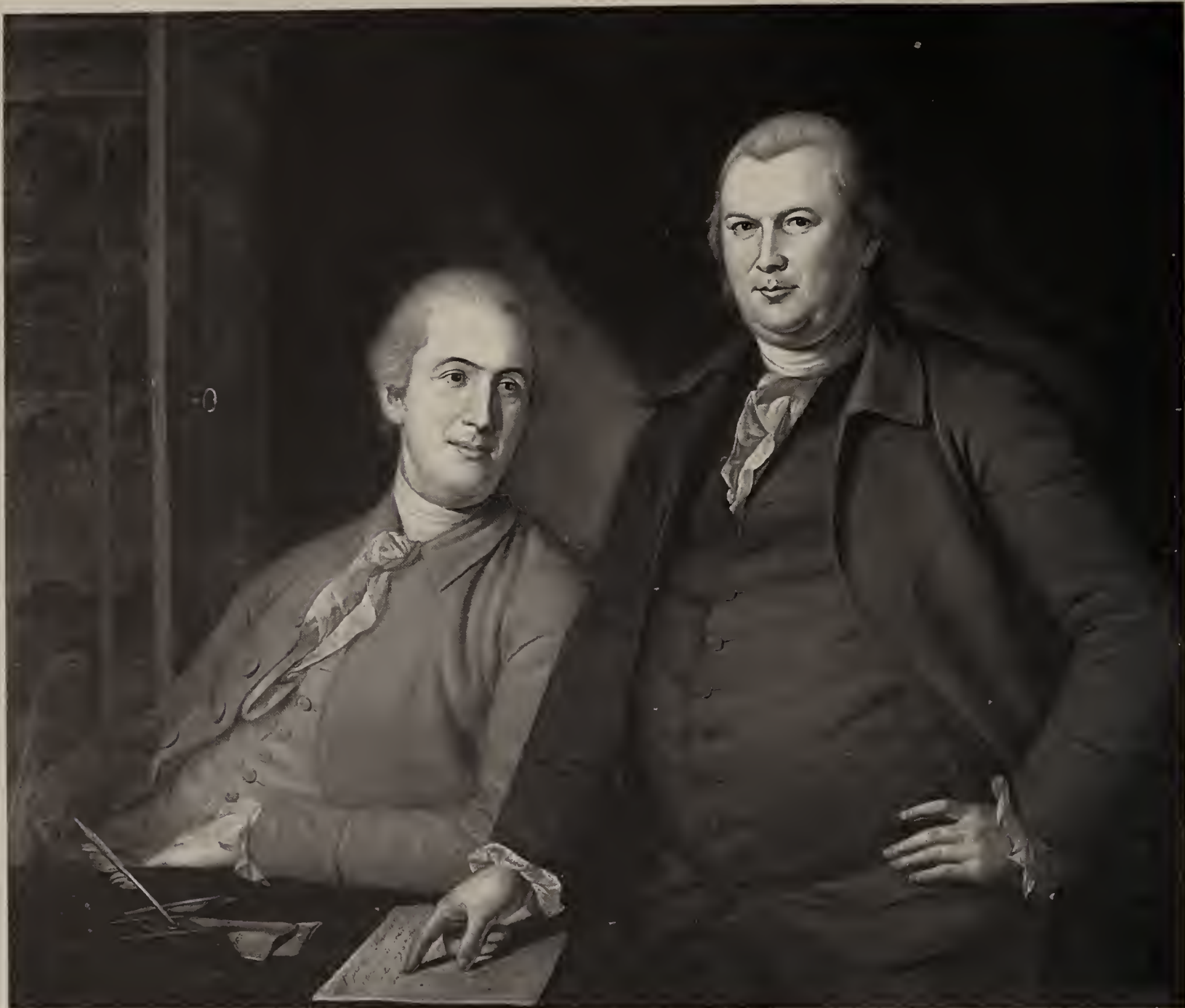
"one of the Bérards" and "our Friends Le Cou-teulx," both of whom were contemplating a China venture. The signing of the peace treaties and the exclusion of the Bérards from the first French postwar China expedition in 1783 may have prompted the Lorient branch of that firm to consider sending a ship of five hundred to six hundred tons under the American flag to China, which would "return directly to you," and to invite Holker to participate in the venture.

In the meantime, Holker had persuaded Morris to invest with him in shipments of tobacco and a voyage to "Guinea" managed by Bérard and Company, profits from which could be used to fund a China venture. Holker and Morris probably combined their efforts to arrange for the *Romulus*, a French frigate then in the Chesapeake, to convoy their ships and other merchant vessels to Europe. Her commander, the Chevalier de Villebrune, was also interested in their project. Pringle reported that Villebrune was willing to ship ginseng, a root prized by the Chinese, on board the *Romulus* when it returned to France. He also reported that de Villebrune was "sanguine" when his thoughts turned to the East, and that de Villebrune planned to arrange for the *Romulus* to be used in the China trade. Unfortunately, the *Romulus* was held in port first by the British blockade and then by ice, and the Bérards showed little interest in the American venture once they began to maneuver for control of the second French expedition to China.

Word of the first French expedition under Grandclos-Meslé reached the United States by early May 1783. Soon thereafter, Holker and Morris began to develop alternate resources for an American China venture. They now involved William Duer, who had served under Robert Clive in India, and Massachusetts merchant Daniel Parker, principals of Daniel Parker and Company which held the contract to supply the Continental army in New York and New Jersey. Holker was a silent partner in the firm. No business agreement between Morris and Parker and Company has been found, but it is probable that arrangements were finalized in mid-June — an understanding had clearly been reached by the



John Holker (1745–1822), one of the earliest advocates of a voyage to China by a vessel flying the flag of the United States of America. Portrait by Gilbert Stuart. Courtesy of the Vose Galleries of Boston, Massachusetts.



Gouverneur Morris (seated), assistant, business associate and close friend of Robert Morris (standing), Superintendent of Finance and owner of one-half of the initial voyage of the *Empress of China*. Portrait by Charles Willson Peale (1783). Courtesy of the Museum of American Art of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts of Philadelphia. Bequest of Richard Ashhurst.

time Parker acquired the *Empress of China* in the summer of 1783.⁷

The original plans called for Morris and Parker and Company to hold a third interest each, and for the final third to be purchased by merchants from Boston, including James Swan and, probably, Joseph Barrell, Thomas Russell, and Samuel Breck. Morris was active in conceptualizing the venture. Daniel Parker assumed responsibility for overall management, procuring and outfitting vessels, obtaining commitments from the potential investors in Massachusetts, and operations in New York, where he came in frequent contact with British commander Guy

Carleton. Turnbull, Marmie and Company of Philadelphia, in which Holker and Morris held an interest, assembled the cargo, primarily ginseng. As early as May 1783, perhaps before Parker and Company became involved, Morris received a visit from John Ledyard, a Connecticut-born tar who had been on Captain James Cook's last voyage. Ledyard advocated sailing to China by way of the North American northwest coast, where ships could trade for furs to be sold at Canton. He was eccentric, and his plan was unconventional and risky enough to be discounted by most prospective sponsors, but he persuaded Morris that it was feasible and poten-

tially profitable. After several conferences which probably extended into July, the two men were close to an understanding, and Ledyard expected to go to New England “to procure Seamen, or a ship, or both.” Morris and his assistant, Gouverneur Morris were, he reported, “wrapt up in the Idea of Yanky Sailors.”⁸

Morris announced his resignation as Superintendent of Finance on 24 January, effective at the end of May 1783. Shortly thereafter, he began to engage actively in private commerce, although he agreed to remain in office in a limited capacity at Congress’ request. On 3 May 1783, he formally asked Congress to relieve him of his responsibilities for the Navy, but it did not. Morris was, thus, still in a position to manage naval personnel and to dispose of public resources in a manner favorable to the development of American commerce to China. For instance, he was able to assign John Green to courts martial being held in Boston, where the *Empress of China* was being prepared for its voyage under his command. This service kept Green on the public payroll until the *Empress* was scheduled to depart for China. Other army and naval officers were hired for this voyage or for related ventures. Morris intended the voyage to achieve both public and private purposes. He told John Jay, soon to be named Secretary for Foreign Affairs, “I am sending some Ships to China in order to encourage others in the adventurous pursuits of Commerce and I wish to see a foundation laid for an American navy.”⁹ However self-serving, his analysis of the significance of the China trade was correct. Morris alone among government officers was able and willing to support it. Congress was weak, preoccupied with weightier issues, and not disposed to privilege any private enterprise, especially if Morris was involved.

Morris’ group began to be referred to as the “East India service” or “American India Company.” From August through October 1783, it made ambitious plans for several China voyages by different routes. Among the ships Parker considered for the China trade were naval vessels the Superintendent put on the auction block.

Complaints from his critics about their sale made Morris more discreet, but no less determined to foster a commerce advantageous to himself and to the nation. By late summer, Parker purchased the *Empress of China*, a proud new 360-ton ship designed by John Peck of Boston on the model of a famous American privateer, *Bellisarius*, which, after her capture by the British, gained a reputation as the fastest ship in the Royal Navy. The *Empress* proved an equally impressive sailer. Parker soon acquired three other ships: the 260-ton *Beaver*, purchased in New York City and renamed *Columbia*; the 800-ton *Bourbon*, a Continental frigate; and the 550-ton *Comte d’Artois*, a French Indiaman built “upon the Peck Construction,” and being refitted at New London, Connecticut. He considered — but rejected — the *Hague* and the *Alliance*, both Continental vessels, and the *Angelica*, another Peck ship.

Guy Carleton, British army commander headquartered in New York, was well informed about the evolution of the project. His first report on the plans for the China venture indicated that the primary focus would be the Ledyard voyage, although another ship, the *Hague*, would be fitted out at Boston for India and sail the traditional easterly route around the Cape of Good Hope. Another variant of the plan assigned the *Empress* to round Cape Horn, head northwest toward the Society Islands (French Polynesia), and then northward to Canton. The *Columbia* was to make a westerly voyage on the Ledyard plan; the *Bourbon* and the *Comte d’Artois* would sail east around the southern tip of Africa.¹⁰

The scope of these plans suggests that the “American India Company” expected to attract European as well as American investors. Ridley had negotiated a sizeable loan in Amsterdam in 1782 for the state of Maryland, which regarded the terms as disadvantageous. Parker and Company then suggested that Ridley convert it into a private loan for which Holker and Morris would be security. Letters from Ridley which arrived in September probably reported both that the Dutch bankers would not accept this proposal, and that the sale of shares in the new French expedition to China had

attracted French investors who might otherwise have put their funds into the American venture. By October, the principals were quarreling amongst themselves. Duer, then slated to be supercargo on the Ledyard vessel, criticized plans for the westerly voyage which Morris still strongly supported. He believed that Gouverneur Morris and Parker had "worked" to destroy Robert Morris' confidence in him. He also considered the compensation Morris offered him inadequate, was disgruntled at being subordinate to Parker, and concerned that the diplomatic foundations for the trade had not been properly laid. By early December, he resigned as supercargo.

The firm decided to send the *Bourbon* and the *Comte d'Artois* to Europe instead of to China. Repairs to the *Beaver/Columbia* had not strengthened her sufficiently, and Parker was unable to find a captain willing to take her around Cape Horn. Her voyage was canceled soon thereafter. Morris blamed Parker for the difficulties.¹¹ By January, the Company's expansive plans were foundering on harsh reality.

The struggle to finance the *Empress'* voyage was even more tempestuous and divisive than the difficulties in locating ships and officers. Boston investors put in small amounts, but did not take a one-third share in the venture, thereby forcing Parker and Company and Morris to raise an extra \$40,000. Parker claimed he had advanced large sums of his own money to cover the firm's expenses, continually asked his partners for funds, and begged Holker to persuade Morris to draw bills for this amount. Holker did not succeed. Duer believed that assets in Parker's hands should have been sufficient to meet the firm's obligations, and suspected Parker of speculation. Holker drew on Le Couteulx for \$60,000 to cover the full value of the firm's half-share of the *Empress* and her cargo. Le Couteulx, however, refused to sell the bills or market a loan for the sum with ship or cargo as security, and did not procure insurance. Prospective French insurers, the firm wrote, heaped scorn and criticism on the venture for "novelty of the risk in every respect" — a China voyage which

began and ended in America, a crew and flag "making its debut in the trade," an outbound cargo of "very slender consumption," and insufficient specie to purchase a return cargo.¹²

Morris apparently juggled public and private assets to cover his \$60,000 share. As Superintendent of Finance, he was able to draw either on Le Couteulx, which held funds belonging to the United States government and with which he had a private account, or on the consortium of bankers administering a Dutch loan to the United States, against which he had already purchased bills worth \$200,000 for his private account. He had already drawn bills for \$23,000 to raise specie for the *Empress'* cargo. On 13 January 1784, Morris instructed Le Couteulx to transfer government funds amounting to \$37,000 into his private account (on the understanding that he would reimburse the government at home). The timing and the amount suggest that this transaction was used to cover the remainder of his share in the venture.

The struggle to raise money for the voyage may have fed tensions between Holker and Morris over settlement of accounts for earlier transactions. The acrimony between the two men was so acute by March 1784 that they completely severed all business connections. When Parker was pressed to pay his creditors, he could not. He fled to Europe in the summer of 1784, leaving Duer and Holker to face all demands against the firm.¹³ The American India Company thus disintegrated completely before the venture was well underway.

The *Empress* sailed from New York for China on 24 February 1784, with instructions from her owners, letters of introduction from the French and Dutch ministers to the United States, sea letters from Congress and the governor of New York, and copies of the Declaration of Independence and the treaties with France and the United Provinces. Green met up with the *Triton*, one of the three ships forming part of the second French expedition to China,

off the coast of Java. Its captain and several officers paid the *Empress* a visit, "offered their service in a polite manner," and invited Green and supercargoes Samuel Shaw and Thomas Randall to dine. The Americans discovered that one of the *Triton's* officers had served with Comte de Grasse in the American theater. This strengthened the bonds between the two groups.

The two ships kept company the remainder of the way to Canton, where the French introduced the Americans to the intricacies of trading. Shaw noted that even the English were not "behindhand" of the other nations, but believed they were motivated by "their jealousy of the French" and "their dislike of the good understanding we kept up with them, which would sometimes appear, in spite of their breeding." Several years later, however, he reported that British and Americans at Canton could "barely treat each other with civility."¹⁴

The *Empress* completed her return cargo and began her homeward voyage in December 1784 in the company of a Dutch vessel, the *General de Klerk*. Randall remained at Canton and arranged with Captain John O'Donnell to ship the supercargoes' private cargo of teas and nankeens on the *Pallas*, one of the many "country ships" owned by British merchants but restricted by East India Company regulations to trade between the Cape of Good Hope and Canton. At the Cape of Good Hope, the *Empress* met up with another American ship owned by Elias Hasket Derby of Salem, Massachusetts, the *Grand Turk*. Her captain, Jonathan Ingersoll, planned to take on East Asian goods at the Cape, and then stop in the West Indies to sell tea and take on sugar and cotton for Salem.

The *Empress* left the Cape on 14 March 1785 and put in at New York Harbor on 10 May. Her cargo was disbursed and sold, and the profits divided between her owners. French chargé d'affaires Guillaume Otto, reporting from New York, did not consider her voyage exceptional, but profitable enough to encourage others in New York to form companies and plan new ventures. Otto was closely monitoring the trade, and predicted that, once Americans were estab-

lished in it, the French would be able to sell them only those goods which they absolutely could not import for themselves.¹⁵

In their initial venture, Morris and Daniel Parker and Company patched together enough capital to acquire four vessels for the China trade, but were able to outfit only one. Their resources were inadequate to create an American India Company, and the United States government could neither restrain nor organize the American urge to trade with East Asia. The *Empress's* maiden voyage was based on the India Company model, which sent large vessels on the traditional route with no other trading stops on the outbound or homeward voyages. It put a premium on reaching each destination ahead of competitors and on market control.¹⁶ Ownership was generally restricted to men with substantial personal fortunes as it required both investing large amounts of capital over a long period of time and raising funds from conservative European sources of credit. More indigenous American models based on variations of the prewar trade were, however, already emerging.

By the summer of 1785, Morris was worried that trade with China might be "overdone." Nevertheless, he planned the *Empress's* second China voyage with assistance from his new firms, Constable, Rucker and Company of New York and Tench Tilghman and Company of Baltimore. William Constable, a merchant with connections in Canada and England, was managing partner of the first firm, and directed the outfitting of China voyages from New York. He and a partner, William Edgar, had already sent out the 150-ton *Betsey* from New York for Bombay, Madras, Batavia, and Canton on 5 April 1784, a route designed after consultation with an employee of the British East India Company. No details of her voyage have been discovered to date, but she returned in 1785 with a cargo of teas, fabrics, and porcelain. Constable's papers contain a memorandum on the China trade, dated 10 May 1784, the day he signed the agreement with Robert and Gouverneur Morris establishing William Constable and Company. Both its date and its content testify to



William Kerin Constable (1751–1803), acting partner in Constable, Rucker and Company, and an early leader in the China trade from New York City. Portrait by Gilbert Stuart. Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Richard de Wolfe Brixey, 1943.

the preeminent role the China trade played in the establishment of this firm, later enlarged to include London-born John Rucker, a member of a mercantile family active in England, Germany, and France. Tench Tilghman, managing partner of Tilghman and Company, was a former aide to George Washington. His firm supervised the purchasing of ginseng for the outbound cargoes.

The *Empress*' second voyage was capitalized at \$100,000, divided into \$1,000 shares. Shareholders included Morris, Tilghman, Constable,

Edgar, Isaac Sears, owner of the *Harriet*, Affouke, a contact in Canton with a one-fifth share in the venture, and William Duer, now secretary to the Board of Treasury, who invested \$20,000 by advancing that amount in *public* funds to Constable, Rucker and Company on a contract that firm held to repay the public debt. Morris had originally tried to engage Shaw and Randall to participate in a more "extensive" plan, but could not agree on terms with them. The *Empress*' cargo included specie, ginseng, wine, brandy, tobacco, tar, logwood, sassafras, anchors, and lumber. Her voyage plan allowed for stops at Madeira, Cape of Good Hope, Madras, and Batavia.¹⁷

The second venture resembled the first in that, although it was under new

management, it was relatively conservative and relied on major players. It incorporated some new elements, such as intermediate trading stops and Asian financing. Some of the new items in the *Empress*' cargo — logwood, sassafras, anchors, and lumber — proved unsuitable for the Chinese market. The venture also suffered from competition from an inexperienced rival, the *Experiment*, which reached Canton ahead of the *Empress*, *Canton*, and *Hope*, all of which were expected from the United States. Affouke re-

ported that her captain, Stewart Dean, had been so determined to sell his ginseng before these vessels arrived that he let it go for \$150 per picul, an Oriental weight equivalent to 133.3 pounds. This capped the price for the season — the *Empress*' best ginseng brought only \$142 per picul. The *Experiment* was almost certainly the same sloop which transported tea, nankins, and cotton from the *Empress*' first cargo from New York to Philadelphia in the summer of 1785. Peter Schermerhorn and Ten Eyck & Seaman, two of the investors in the *Experiment*, had put a small sum into the first voyage of the *Empress*, and Peter Schermerhorn had sailed out of New York harbor with her on her maiden voyage as far as Sandy Hook. On 18 December 1785, the *Experiment* began her own voyage to China. Her burden was only eighty-five tons — the Chinese reportedly mistook her for a tender vessel. Her cargo of ginseng, specie, furs, turpentine, tobacco, and wine was valued at £8,860. Nineteen shares worth £600 were sold to eleven individuals and seven partnerships, realizing a return sufficient to entice several of the original investors to plan a second venture.¹⁸

Scrappy, underfinanced figures operating on the periphery of the mercantile world were developing radically different voyage plans which imitated the prewar and the "country ship" models. Outfitters like the *Experiment*'s owners used smaller vessels, designed outbound cargoes to satisfy the needs of Europeans in East Asian establishments as well as the Chinese market, and allowed for different destinations, routes, and stops along the way. They took on shark fins, bird nests, sandalwood, rhinoceros horns, and other exotic products which found a good market at Canton. They invested smaller sums and used different sources to finance their ventures. Captains sold outbound and inbound cargoes wherever they could find an outlet, and defied mercantile regulations whenever they felt the need.

One such voyage began in Boston in December 1783, as the *Empress* was coming down to pick up her first cargo in New York. Isaac Sears, owner of the 50-ton *Harriet*, Captain Hallet,

originally intended to send her to Europe to sell ginseng to vessels bound for China, but had not been able to get her off in time. He ordered her instead to the Cape of Good Hope, where, it was reported, officers of outbound Indiamen bought her ginseng for double its value in Hyson tea to prevent her from competing with British sales at Canton — a story no doubt intended to put a favorable face on the same kind of irregular trade American vessels had conducted before the Revolution. The *Harriet*'s exclusion from St. Helena on her homeward voyage suggests this as well. Her six-month voyage earned Sears a tidy profit, and may have encouraged him to invest in the second voyage of the *Empress*.¹⁹

Americans, including Morris, were quite willing to forego the expense and risk of complete voyages to India and China if they could find desirable cargoes at some intermediate point. Only a few days after entering into partnership with William Constable, Robert and Gouverneur Morris suggested to their French friends that the crown should open Mauritius or Réunion to American trade. Gouverneur Morris offered a plan of trade reminiscent of a controversial proposal by Bertrand-François Mahé de La Bourdonnais in the 1740s. La Bourdonnais, who had captured Madras from the British, argued that France should abandon the idea of establishing an empire in India and concentrate instead on developing a few strongholds, such as Mauritius, which would be emporiums for trade in East India goods and which could serve as bases for naval operations during war.

Gouverneur Morris' plan was designed to suit both French and American circumstances and make a new French East India Company superfluous. He recommended that the French trade should be divided into two separate legs, the first from France to the islands, and then from the islands to East Asia, with two separate sets of vessels. The islands would, thus, be the final destination for ships from France and America, not merely a way station. "Assorted cargoes," both for East Asia and for home ports in France and the United States, would be avail-

able there, and the trade could be carried on "in smaller vessels, smaller expence, shorter time." He also expected that officers of other East India companies would carry on their private trade at the islands because they could more easily conceal it from their employers and would get a quicker return on their investments. He predicted that this trade would produce the traditional list of benefits mercantilists aspired to: increased numbers of French seamen, greater revenue for the crown, decreased expenditures for defense and for East India establishments, increases in population, revenue, mercantile wealth, consumption of French manufactures, and military preparedness at a strategic location. He suggested that it would strengthen bonds between France and the United States, and that France's rivals would be weakened by their continued support of "cumbersome establishments" in the East Indies.

Robert Morris made essentially the same arguments in a letter written shortly after, but added calculations that France would stand to gain five to ten million livres in revenue annually by allowing free trade at the islands. French authorities had, in fact, already decided to open Mauritius as a way station for American vessels and gave them limited rights to trade. The *Grand Turk*, Captain Ebenezer West, was the first American vessel known to have taken advantage of the privilege. Once the French East India Company was reestablished, monopolistic restrictions severely limited the amount and variety of East Indies merchandise available there. A decree issued in 1787 improved conditions somewhat, but the trade Gouverneur Morris envisioned failed to develop until after the French monopoly ended in 1790. Then it flourished briefly until the outbreak of war in Europe in 1793.

The opening of Mauritius was, nevertheless, very significant. Stephen Higginson, former congressman from Massachusetts, saw that it allowed "common traders of small Capitals" to engage in it. He continued: "To have that or any other branch of trade so circumstanced that none but wealthy Individuals, or companies can

pursue is not to be desired upon public principles." Higginson also stressed the strategic location of the two islands, which he considered "peculiarly favourable" to allow the French "to annoy the British trade to India and China and to protect their own," and argued that "if a free trade is permitted to us, they certainly will have every Supply, and every advantage for cruising upon the British from thence."²⁰

The East India trade was also democratized when it was demonstrated conclusively that small ships could profitably engage in it. The 90-ton *Lady Washington* sailed in company of the *Columbia* on the first American voyage to the Northwest Coast (1787). Six owners expended \$49,000 to outfit the two ships. In August 1788, Phineas Bond, British consul in Philadelphia, mentioned the arrival of two 150-ton brigantines, one from Canton, the other from Madras, whose cargoes were "valuable, tho' their burden is not great." In 1790, the 70-ton *Hope* left Boston for the Northwest Coast, where it took on 1,400 otter skins and proceeded to China. She was a two-masted, square rigged brigantine registered to Thomas H. Perkins, James Magee, and Russell Sturgis. She carried a crew of fourteen and sailed the westerly route to Hawaii, then to the Pacific northwest, and then to China. The ship's smith, who forged iron collars to trade to the Indians, was responsible for the great success of the fur trading leg of the voyage.

In 1794, the 89-ton sloop *Union* sailed out of Boston on the same route with a nineteen-year-old captain, John Boit. Probably smallest of all was the 26-ton *Fair American*, whose ability to traverse "such an immense tract of Boisterous Ocean as she had done" amazed a British observer. These voyages defied the then common wisdom that only large vessels could trade profitably since the Chinese taxed all ships equally, whatever their size.²¹

One of the largest ships known to have been sent to China during this period, the 800-ton *Massachusetts*, owned by Samuel Shaw and Thomas Randall, had a disastrous outbound voyage and never returned. She was to have exchanged her cargo at Batavia for goods suit-

able for China, but Dutch authorities refused her permission to trade. By the time she reached Canton, her hold was covered with mold an inch thick, and her goods rendered all the more useless. Shaw accepted an offer to sell her to the Danish East India Company for \$65,000. In 1790, William Constable discussed plans to build a China ship of 900 tons modeled on the *Massachusetts* with shipbuilder Thomas Robison of Portland, Maine, at an estimated cost of \$40,000, which he believed would be recouped in one voyage. He canceled his order, however, when he learned that the market for cotton, which the ship was to carry from Bombay to China, had collapsed.²²

Entrepreneurs reduced the total amount they invested in outbound cargoes by loading a variety of goods for sale along the way and by varying destinations. The voyage of the *United States*, Captain Thomas Bell, which left Philadelphia on 24 March 1784, is a prime example. The ship was owned by Philip Moore, Mark Bird, James Wilson, Joseph Harrison, James Hood, John Redman, and Joshua Humphreys, the shipbuilder who would design frigates for the United States Navy after 1794. She carried silver, lead, tobacco, ginseng, wine, turpentine, naval stores, and other goods, and was instructed to stop at Mauritius on both the outbound and homeward voyages. Bell ignored these orders and went directly to Pondichéry to sell the wines — where the supercargo absconded with the silver. Bell managed to take on a return cargo and headed home by way of the British West Indies. On the pretext that his crew was ill with scurvy, he put in at Jamaica, no doubt hoping to sell goods there in defiance of British trade restrictions. A vigilant governor however, forced him to depart after only two days.²³

Bell's disappointment was not typical. Other vessels regularly sold their teas, silks, and porcelains wherever they could find a market along the way. Sales in the Caribbean were common by 1787. Phineas Bond reported from Philadelphia that Americans not only stopped in the West Indies on their homebound voyages, but re-

shipped teas there which they could not market in the United States in casks covered with Indian corn. He also expected that the practice would, "no doubt, ...thro' some other medium of deception be extended to Gt. Britain and Ireland particularly to the latter."

After her second voyage to China, the *Empress*, renamed the *Edgar*, was reassigned to European duty and made at least one trip between New York and Belfast, Ireland. Whether she had East India goods in her hold has not been determined, but Morris' firm, Constable, Rucker and Company, is said to have reexported East India goods on a "vast" scale both to the West Indies and to the British Isles, and even to have sold tea to the British East India Company. Americans trampled on British sensibilities in yet another way. To Bond's great chagrin, the *Asia* carried British as well as American commodities to sell at Canton in 1788. He remarked that most of the British goods had been "intrusted" by the "too liberal faith of British merchants" to American dealers, "who are now speculating and sporting with the property of their creditors and screening themselves under a most relaxed system of laws."²⁴

Shaw's journal of the first voyage of the *Empress* pointed to yet another possibility interested Americans would exploit:

British subjects in India, who wish to remit their property to Europe will find means of doing it through other channels than that of the company's treasury. They get a penny, and sometimes two-pence, more on a dollar, and bills at a shorter sight. Besides, the credit of the English company is not now so good with their subjects in India as formerly.

Bottomry, or respondentia, loans, in which the vessel or its cargo served as collateral, gave Americans financing for return cargoes that was so difficult to raise elsewhere. This was, no doubt, how the *United States* was able to acquire a return cargo after the supercargo ran off with the silver. Within months, these loans were a

regular feature of American voyage plans. The *Canton*'s several voyages provide an example. A French observer describing her first voyage noted in April 1786 that it was an expedition characterized by the "greatest economy" — the cargo of goods and silver worth no more than 20,000 piasters. He had heard, however, that outfitters were counting on investment from East India company officers to make up their return cargo.

After the *Canton*'s arrival in Philadelphia, Bond passed on a report "that a large sum was advanced at Canton at a moderate premium upon Bottomry on the ship *Canton*, Captain [Thomas] Truxton, lately arrived here." He also noted how general this practice had become. "European factors," he said, gave "considerable credit and made great advances" to American traders, who now "look with a certainty of support." Bond described the return of the *Commerce* from Madras with a cargo, three-fifths of which was owned by Americans and the remainder by "various persons in Madras who adopt this circuitous mode of getting their property to England, in preference to the more expensive one of a direct remittance."

Even worse than the assistance Americans found "from the very quarter where they expected opposition" was their boasting "of the civility and kindness they had experienced." Bond felt constrained to recommend that "an early check or restraint" should be "thrown in their way, either by thwarting their credit or by withholding the articles suitable to their commerce." Truxton experienced no such check during his voyage of 1790–1791. One half of this venture was "owned in India and China by people whose names will not appear but who will furnish the principle part of the funds." Truxton was received in Calcutta by none other than Charles Cornwallis, whose surrender at Yorktown was prelude to his new career as Governor General there. India Company rules made no difference to Cornwallis, who reportedly said he would *welcome* a hundred American ships a year, because they drove down the prices British captains charged on their goods.

Americans depended heavily on foreign funds to finance their China ventures. Bond was well aware of the importance of specie for the China trade, fingering illicit commerce between the United States and Cuba as a major source. He reported that "Spaniards" came secretly into American ports and brought "enormous" amounts of specie (\$500,000 in 1786, \$60,000 lodged in the Bank of North America within a few weeks), in return for which they exported a variety of commodities. He parried Gouverneur Morris' recommendation to the French about Mauritius by suggesting that Britain should make the Bahamas a free port "under proper regulations from whence the Spaniards could draw the supplies they want," as a way of diverting this commerce into British channels.²⁵

Americans strove to best their competitors by developing or utilizing nontraditional routes. Two voyages in 1787 illustrate this trend. The *Alliance*, Captain Thomas Read, now a Morris vessel, approached China from the east, but sailed south of Australia, around New Guinea and then north to Canton through the Solomon Islands. Her off season (23 December) arrival allowed her supercargo, George Harrison, to make a very profitable sale of her cargo ("upwards of two hundred and fifty piculs of ginseng"), and the novelty of her route attracted considerable attention. On 30 September 1787, the *Columbia*, Captain John Kendrick, and the *Lady Washington*, Captain Robert Gray, left Boston, rounded Cape Horn, and headed for the Pacific Northwest Coast, the first of many such ventures on the Ledyard plan which became a New England specialty. Like the *Empress*, the two vessels also obtained letters of introduction from French and Dutch consuls. After taking a cargo of furs to Canton, the *Columbia*, now commanded by Gray, sailed home by way of Africa, and became the first American flag to circumnavigate the world. By the 1790s, American captains were ranging freely all over the Pacific, north and south of the equator.²⁶

Bond listed a number of factors which militated against the success of early American ventures, "the delays of the voyage, the neces-

sary expense of the outfit, the difficulty of making suitable remittances to obtain the proper investments," even the inferior teas American ships brought home. Awed by the power of private enterprise and American determination, he reported, however: "if one may judge from the present rage, it should seem as if new sources of profit appeared, and that the means of investment were facilitated so as to secure the future extension of the trade." Two months later, he noted that Americans were "using every possible endeavour to render this trade as productive as possible; and to extend it to more valuable articles than they have hitherto dealt in."²⁷ The creativity he described minimized chances that the American China trade would founder.

There were sixteen American vessels at Canton in 1789, by which time Americans were second only to the British there. Eight of the vessels were from Massachusetts, four from New York, two from Philadelphia, and two were listed as from Mauritius. Higginson estimated that at least twenty American vessels annually went to Mauritius, India, and China. Soon after the American Constitution was ratified, Americans active in the China trade, including William Constable, petitioned the government to impose an additional duty on China goods imported into the United States on foreign bottoms.²⁸ United States mariners and merchants had demonstrated that trade with East Asia would flourish more under "independency" than it had under British rule. American seafarers had negotiated success-

fully for unofficial complicity, cooperation and companionship with sailors and officials from every European nation represented in East Asia, and won the grudging admiration of their rivals for their unorthodox, free trading methods. They explored every avenue which might enable them to win against the odds recited by conservative European mercantilists who shrank from financing their ventures. The "American India Company's" inability to survive the *Empress'* maiden voyage was a loud sermon in favor of innovation based on more indigenous models: smaller ships, new routes, varied cargoes, shorter or circuitous voyages, jerry-rigged financing, defiance of mercantile regulations, and daring. Its openness, lack of discipline and organization, its willingness to improvise and the superior quality of its officers, crews and vessels were, in fact, the source of its strength and resilience.



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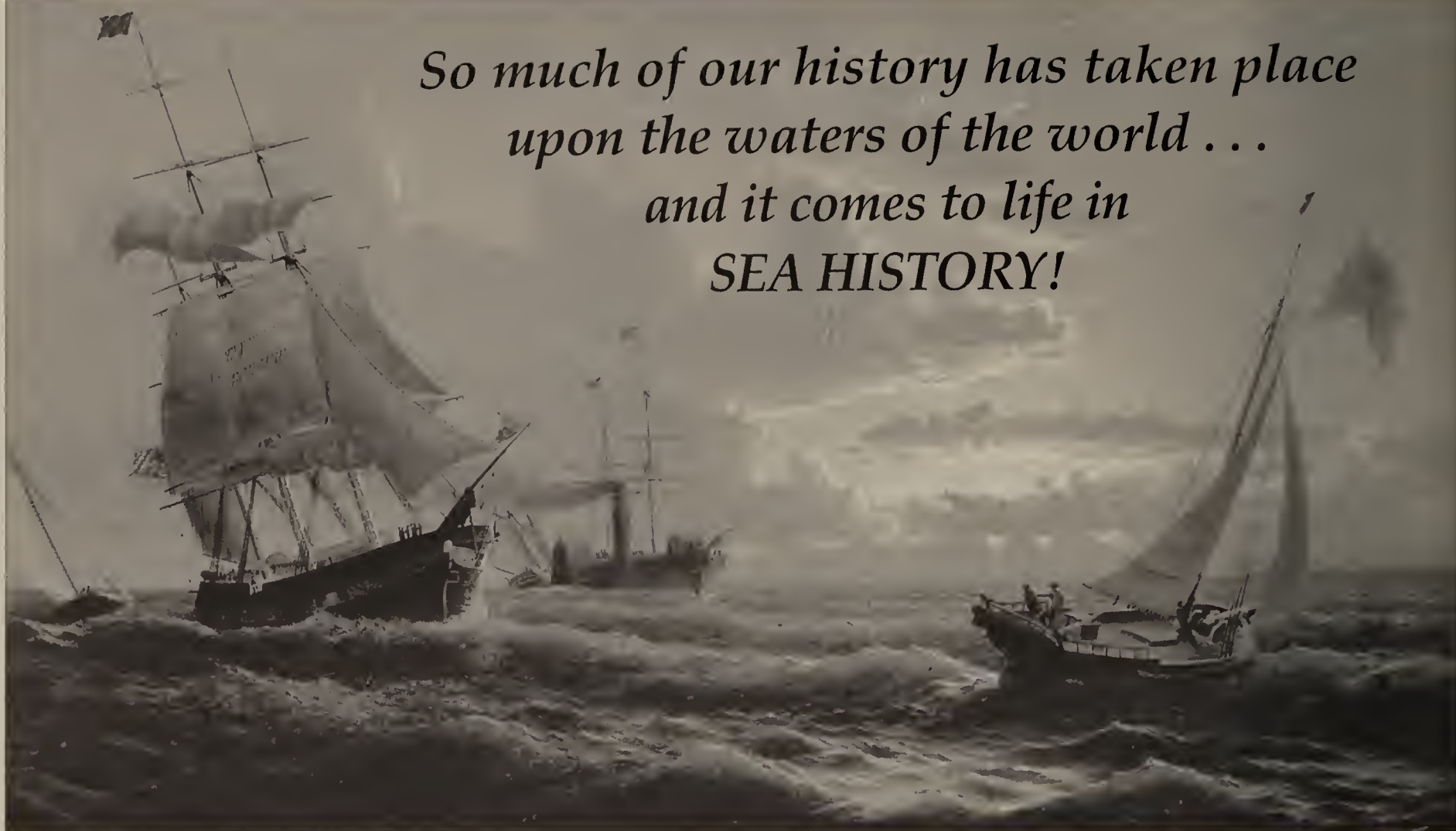
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19. *South Carolina Gazette and Weekly Advertiser*, 29–31 July 1784; Smith, *Empress*, 23–24, 205; *PRM*, 8:875; Parker to RM, 10 February 1784, *PRM*, 9. Subsequent voyages on the *Harriet's* plan, such as the initial voyage of the *Grand Turk*, were less successful.
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22. Morison, *Maritime History*, 52; Smith, *Empress*, 249; Quincy, *Shaw*, 356–360; Davis, "Constable," 156–159.
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Aleut *Baidarkas*

ROZA G. LIAPUNOVA
TRANSLATED BY JERRY SHELEST

Under the conditions of their coastal and insular way of life, boats were the only means of transportation among the Aleuts: single-hatch, two-hatch and three-hatch skin *baidarkas*, and multi-paddle skin boats, *baidaras*.¹ *Baidarkas* were hunting boats, but the multi-paddle *baidaras* were used only for transportation from island to island, for the hauling of cargo, and in military raids.

In the maritime hunting-fishing orientation of the Aleuts' economy, the *baidarka* played an especially important role. It was indispensable for supplying the people with the means of subsistence. The sea around the Aleutian Islands did not freeze and almost year round it was the sphere of one or another procurement activity. The Aleuts hunted sea mammals in the open sea also (going out 150 kilometers or more from shore) and on rookeries which could only be reached in *baidarkas*. They also fished in the sea from *baidarkas*. In them they set out for the rocky islets to hunt birds and collect eggs.

According to the very apt remark of Veniaminov, the *baidarka* was for the Aleuts "the most needed means of existence" and "was as necessary as the plough and horse were for the farmer."² And indeed, the *baidarka* had the leading role in the Aleuts' means of production.

The *baidarka* had the most telling effect in the hunt for sea mammals thanks to its speed and maneuverability, which were decisive for spotting and harpooning prey. Its noiselessness in approaching the prey played a large role also.³

Museum collections make it possible to make detailed studies of the construction of the Aleut *baidarkas*, while information about their

qualities is found in the early reports of travelers and explorers.⁴

In the collections of the North America Department of the MAE there are one single-hatch *baidarka* and thirty-two *baidarka* models made by Aleuts and brought back by Voznesenskii and other Russian travelers and explorers in the first half of the nineteenth century. Three *baidarkas* (single-hatch, two-hatch, and three-hatch), the frame of a single-hatch *baidarka*, and nine *baidarka* models are in the collection of the Central Naval Museum in Leningrad (St. Petersburg).

The *baidarka* models supplement our knowledge of that particular type of boat considerably. Most of them reproduce the original *baidarkas* in all details with amazing accuracy. Moreover, they give an idea about the equipment of the hunter and his garments which is not given in an accurate enough form in literature sources.

The Aleuts had three types of *baidarkas*: the single-hatch (*iqakh* [*iqya*]), the principal form of hunting boat; the two-hatch (*ulliukhtadak* [*ulu*]), used by an old man accompanied by a boy to go to sea for the purpose of training the latter, or for the transportation of a woman, old man or child; and the three-hatch (*ulliukhtak* [*ulu*]).⁵ After the introduction of firearms among the Aleuts, the two-hatch *baidarkas* became more necessary for hunting than before because the recoil while shooting could overturn the light single-hatch *baidarka*, which had very little stability. In the two-hatch *baidarka* the paddler sits in the rear hatch. They began to build three-hatch *baidarkas* at the time of the arrival of the Russians and used them primarily



An Aleut in a *Baidarka*. Drawing by M. D. Levashov. TsGAVMf.

as a means of transportation (the paddlers sat in the first and third hatches and the passenger in the middle).

A hunter in a *baidarka* was obliged to wear over his garments a hooded *kamleika* (outer shirt) made of intestines. A wide drip skirt made out of strips of intestines (*tsuki*) was stretched around the hatch of the *baidarka* and around the hunter under his arms by means of a sinew cord (with a strap over the left shoulder), linking the hunter and *baidarka* into a single unit. On his head, over the hood, the hunter wore a painted wooden hat with a bill or a visor extending forward; it protected the eyes from the sun's rays and from the spray of water. Veniaminov wrote that the Aleuts are somewhat clumsy on dry land, but that they had "a beautiful and majestic appearance" in *baidarkas*, and "it seems that [the Aleut] was created for the *baidarka* or the *baidarka* for him in order to show him in the best possible light."⁶

The explorers and voyagers of the nineteenth

century noted the high technical quality of the Aleut *baidarka* and the exceptional dexterity of the Aleuts in controlling it. Veniaminov writes: "It seems to me that the Aleut *baidarka* is so perfected in its type that even a mathematician cannot add much, if anything, to perfect its seaworthiness." And in another place: "At that time, the excellent riders (*ezdok*) had [*baidarkas*] so light in their motion that they kept up with birds (skimming the water with the aid of their feet and wings before taking off), so narrow and with such a sharp keel that without a rider they could not maintain an upright position in the water, and were so light that a seven-year-old child was able to move it from place to place without strain."⁷ However, these words referred to *baidarkas* of earlier years (probably prior to the arrival of the Russians), and during Veniaminov's stay in the Aleutian Islands some decline in the technique of their construction was already observed. G. Sarychev notes the great art of the Aleuts in controlling the *baidarka*, and its speed:

"The islanders in their *baidarkas* travel so speedily that no light ship's boat is able to overtake them. We observed that when our vessel sailed at four miles per hour, even then they overtook it."⁸

The Aleuts amazed the Russians with their indefatigability in *baidarka* travel; they were able to paddle for ten and twelve hours without rest. Veniaminov writes: "I had occasion to travel with them several times from fourteen and to even twenty hours without touching shore, and in all that time they stopped no more than once and for no longer than fifteen minutes." And farther: "When captains Krenitsyn and Levashov were here, one Aleut, from among the best *baidarka* riders, was sent from Kapitanskaia Gavan' (Captains Bay, Unalaska) to Issanakh Strait (Isanotski Strait) with important news, who in 25 or 30 hours covered a distance of about 200 versts.... And also it happened many times that in 12 to 18 hours they traveled from Ugamak to Sannakh (about 120 versts)."⁹

The best of the Aleut *baidarkas* could sail against the swiftest current in the straits.

The qualities needed by first-rate *baidarka* riders and sea hunters were taught among the Aleuts from early childhood. The youngsters were "trained to operate the *baidarka*: they were taught to be skillful both in the launching and the landing of the *baidarka*, how to manage it in heavy surf, and how to save themselves and others in dangerous circumstances, but especially how to be skillful in hunting and fishing."¹⁰ Their education encompassed every-

The amount of material (excluding wood) used in the construction of a *baidarka* (and the hunting outfit) is apparent from the standard determined in 1816 by the Russian-American Company for issue to the Aleuts.¹²

For a two-man *baidarka*:

6 <i>laftaks</i> of bachelors ¹³	3 rubles each	18r.
2 gut kamleias	5 rubles each	10r.
7 funts of baleen for tying, whale sinews for sewing, portion of whale blubber		2r.

day training exercises: how to sit straight with legs outstretched forward and to be able at the same time to bend the arm in the proper manner for harpoon throwing. Little girls were trained how to equip hunters going to sea: to sew skin *baidarka* coverings and sew waterproof garments from intestines.

The Aleuts went many tens of *versts* out to sea and returned home in any weather without going off course, recognizing the correct direction by the flight of birds and other signs. If the wind became stronger and there was surf at the shore, they waited for an approaching wave and its crest carried them to shore; when the wave receded, they managed to pull the *baidarka* farther inland to prevent it from being carried back into the sea by a new wave. When the sea was running strong, they attached inflated bladders (a seal or sea lion stomach) to the sides of the *baidarka*, or if several *baidarkas* were at sea they tied them in twos or threes in a row and in between they attached to the sides inflated blad-

ders (so the sides of the *baidarkas* would not rub when they pitched); they pointed the bows toward the waves and waited for the calm. The bladder (*sanguk* [*sanguk*]) was an indispensable accessory for each *baidarka*. If the skin cover of a *baidarka* was torn, the hunter could, by leaning on the bladder, get out of the *baidarka*, float on the water with its assistance, repair the *baidarka* and get in again using the bladder for support. However, this could only be done in

The Aleut *baidarkas* had the following dimensions (in meters):

	Single-hatch	Two-hatch	Three-hatch
Length	4.2 to 6	5.6 to 7	7 to 8.5
Width	0.42 to 0.54	0.6 to 0.8	0.72 to 0.85
Height	0.27 to 0.4	0.38 to 0.54	0.4 to 0.55

calm weather; during a storm the bladder was put into the *baidarka* and blown up as much as possible; it kept the boat afloat even if it was filled with water. There existed also another method for repairing the *baidarka* at sea (if there were three or more of them): the damaged *baidarka* was raised out of the water and placed across the other two. When a leak appeared in the *baidarka* seams, the latter were smeared with sea mammal oil.

Hollow bones or wooden tubes were used to bail water out of a *baidarka*.¹¹ They also used sea sponges to bail out the water.

The paddles (*akadgusik* [*haqadguusiĭ*]) used with *baidarkas* had two blades and were about 2.5 meters in length. The blades of the paddle were oval with sharpened ends and with a longitudinal rib on both flat surfaces; the shaft was round. When the *baidarka* tipped over the skilled hunters could, without getting out, right it with the aid of the paddle. They also carried out other difficult maneuvers with the aid of the paddle. Loss of a paddle was the greatest misfortune at sea.

The principal part of the *baidarka* was the wooden latticed frame usually made from Californian cedar, the lightest and strongest wood. According to the information of Veniaminov, up to sixty bone parts were inserted in the frame of old *baidarkas* built for speed in order that each part of the *baidarka* "had movement" during use. The frames of the *baidarkas* in the nineteenth century were already entirely of wood. All parts of the frame were connected (tied) with strips of baleen.

The frame of the *baidarka* consisted of several parts.¹⁴

1) Upper frame with longitudinal details: side planks or planchettes, a middle plank or midsection (from the bow portion to the hatch and from the hatch to the stern), and cross pieces or beams (three to four in the bow portion and two to three in the stern). The bow and stern ends of the frame were formed by the widening ends of the side planks; sometimes between the latter were inserted cross planks — a *breshtuk* and a stern thwart. Baleen fibers joining the parts were

threaded through drilled openings or wound around the separate parts. At the top of the frame toward the stern, they secured to neighboring beams (with baleen fibers) a ring made of a bent wooden strip, a coaming, forming an opening for the *baidarka* hatch. In two-hatch and three-hatch *baidarkas* the coamings were also placed closer to the center and to the stern.

2) The keel (rather, keel plank or "false keel" because a keel in the true sense did not exist in the *baidarka*) was always assembled from three parts (in order to make the frame of the *baidarka* less brittle) and tied together with baleen fibers. The rear part of the keel plank, expanding almost to the height of the *baidarka*, formed the stern projection or stern post. In the front part the keel plank, expanding to approximately double, formed the lower part of the split bow of the *baidarka*, the stem.

3) The upper part of the stem, formed by a wooden plate, was joined at one end to the frame; the opposite, front, end was pointed and could be either straight or upturned. The upper half of the bow was attached to the lower half with baleen strips laced through drilled openings. Aleut *baidarkas* had bifid bows of two types: an upturned one and a straight one.

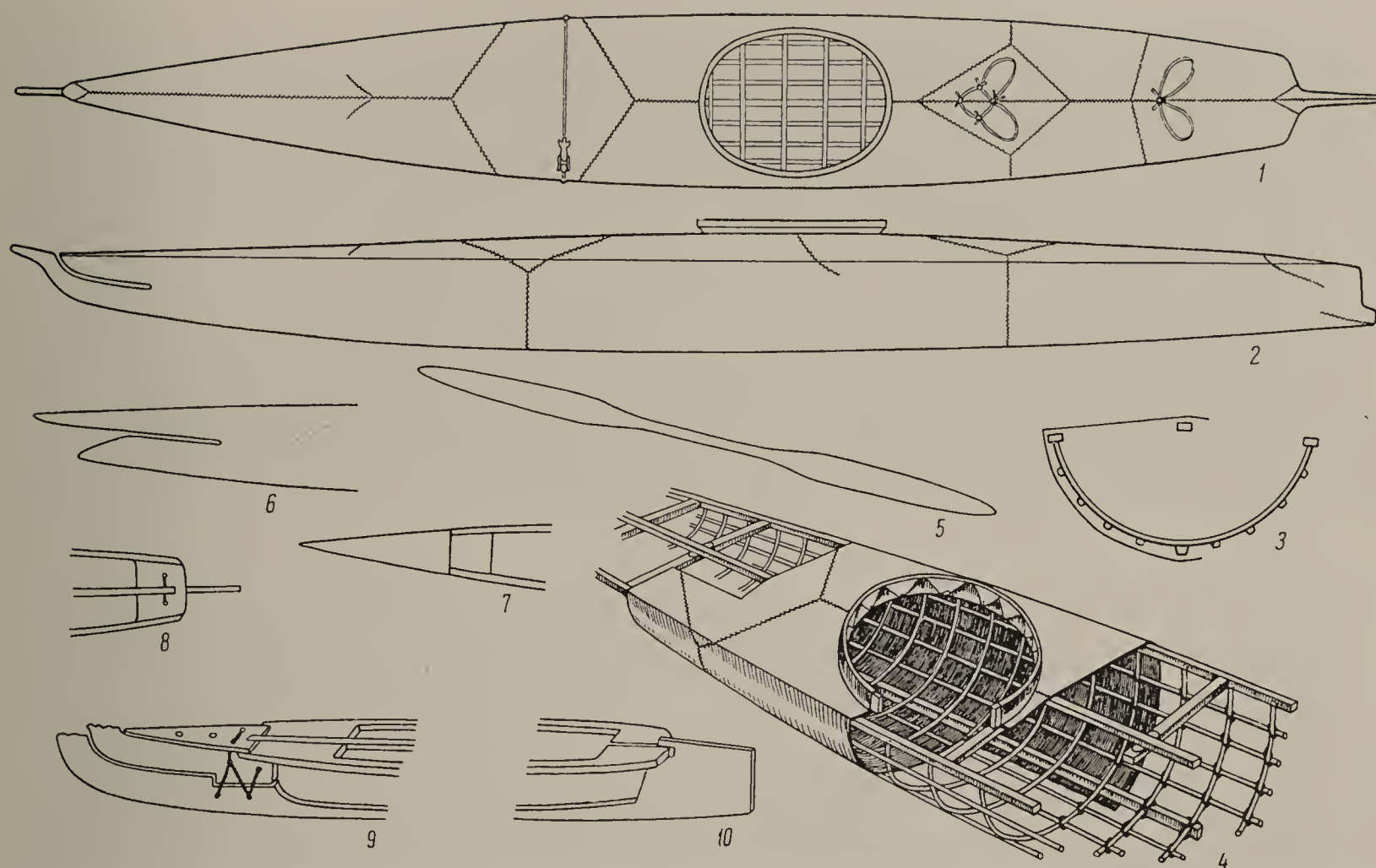
4) The stern projection of the *baidarka*, the stern post, had the shape of an irregular rectangle (it slanted from the frame) with a cutout where the end of the frame fit it.

5) Along the keel along the sides of the *baidarka* ran longitudinal planks (round or rectangular in cross section) or stringers (two, three, four on each side).

6) On the stringers from the inside were placed cross-framing ribs, made of bent sticks round or rectangular in cross-section. Each juncture of the stringers with the ribs was tied with baleen fibers. The pointed ends of the ribs fitted into round openings in the lower part of the side planks or planchettes.

7) The hatch was framed by a bent wooden plank.

The entire frame was painted red, sometimes with additions of blue stripes. The completed frame of the *baidarka* was fitted with a skin cover which was stretched also over the top of the boat, the deck, excluding the hatches. Sea



Aleut *baidarkas* (from the collection of the MAE). 1) Top view; 2) side view; 3) cross-section; 4) detail of frame with cover 5) paddle; 6) stem with cover (side view); 7) stem (frame, top view); 8) stern (frame, top view); 9) stem (frame, side view); 10) stern (frame, side view).

lion skins were considered the best for these purposes and were used for covering the *baidarkas* as well as *baidaras*. Seal skin was used for covering smaller *baidarkas*. When sea lion skins were lacking, walrus skins were used (most often for *baidaras*), but these were too thick and required too much effort to process them (splitting the skin). A *baidarka* cover was sewn from two, three, or four whole skins with inserts between them. The cover was cut over the frame by the men, and the women sewed it (using small running stitches^a with thread made of twisted sinew). Then the men fitted the cover onto the frame and sewed (also with running stitches) the last seam from the hatch to the stern and across the stern in the single-hatch *baidarka*, and from the front hatch to the stern and across the stern in the two-hatch and three-hatch *baidarkas*. All seams on the *baidarka*, except the last one, were

internal; the last seam was external. In the completed *baidarka* the seams were carefully smeared with sea mammal oil to waterproof them. The upper seams were decorated with tiny bird feathers and long strands of wool inserted into the seam. After the arrival of the Russians, multicolored pieces of wool thread, 0.5 to 1 centimeter in length, instead of feathers, were inserted into the seams; they also decorated the seams with large beads (*korol'ki*) and glass seed beads (*stekliarus*) of various colors. Preparing to go to sea, the hunters lined the bottom of the *baidarka* with an old skin, on top of which they placed grass mats; then the craft was loaded with provisions, water, and stones for ballast.

In front of the hatch where the hunter sits and behind it one or two strips of baleen or thin sinew cord were tied across the *baidarka*; under these cords hunting equipment was secured. At the sides of these strips were often placed decorative carved bone images of sea otters. Behind the hatch on many *baidarkas* were thong loops, one pair and sometimes two. These apparently

^a *Smetochnyi shov*, literally "running stitch," but may mean overcast stitch.

served for the transportation of game.

The *baidarka* skin covers were changed every year or even more frequently (they did not last longer than a year). To prevent the skin from swelling in the water and from drying out on land, it was periodically greased with sea mammal oil. The frame of the *baidarka*, with repairs of course, could remain serviceable for several years.

The *baidarka* and *baidara* construction was carried out by special masters whose art was highly valued; but every Aleut could repair a *baidarka*.

The materials used for *baidarka* construction encompassed all the means presented by the natural resources of the islands, which were utilized with maximum efficiency: wood washed onto the shore by the sea; skins, sinews and oil of sea mammals; baleen and bone. The *baidarka* decorations illustrate the aesthetic inclinations of the Aleuts and some aspects of their world view connected with hunting.

The type of skin-covered hunting boat with a wooden frame with a closed deck excluding only the hatch for the paddler-hunter, was widely distributed along the entire northern seaboard of North America, including the northwestern part, the coast of Greenland, and also Northeast Asia (among the Eskimo,¹⁵ Chukchi, and Koriak). Within this region many variations of skin boats of special local forms, typical of one or another region or tribal group, are found.¹⁶ But the principal features of a single type of construction are preserved everywhere: a wooden frame consisting of an upper part with longitudinal (planchettes, midsections) and cross (beams) details; "false keel"; stringers; ribs; and sea mammal skin covers, leaving open only the hatch.

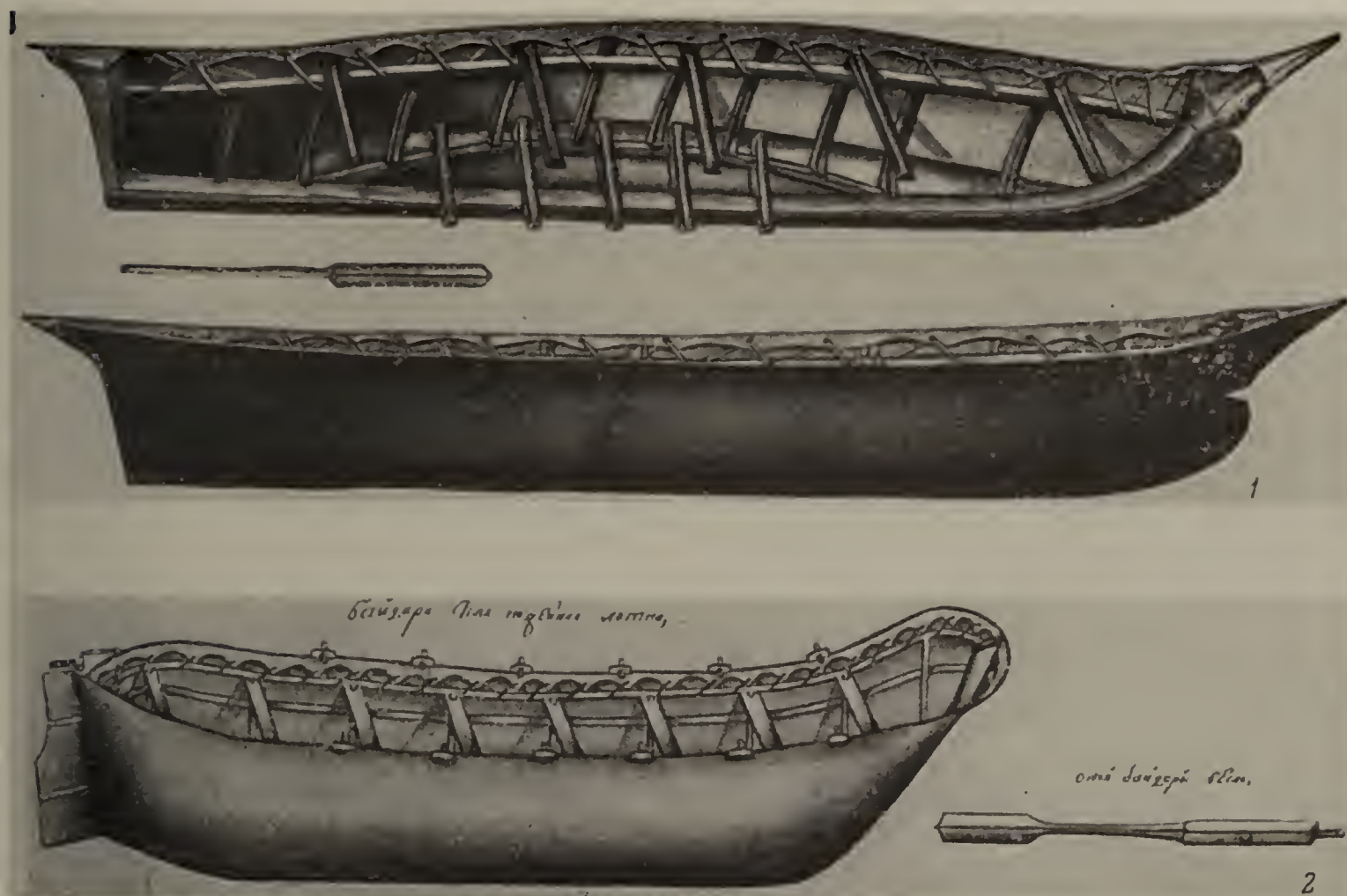
The character of the skin boats was conditioned first of all by the specific area where they were to be used (on the open sea, in the coastal zone, encircled with ice, in a river, in a lake), and then by their function in the economy.

Thus, the construction of the *baidarkas* of the Aleuts, an island people among whom sea hunting was the chief branch of the economy,

achieved the highest perfection. They were excellently adapted to their use in the open sea — they had the longest length in conjunction with a narrow width and sharp keels, and possessed speed and maneuverability; Aleut *baidarkas* had pointed bows and a truncated stern with a stern projection (stern post). The kayaks of the Eskimos (including even the Pacific Eskimo group), Chukchi and Koriak basically had an identically pointed bow and stern. The latter feature permitted, while navigating through ice, movement in both directions without turning. The Aleuts had no need to reduce the seaworthiness of their *baidarkas* by use of such features because the sea was open the whole year round. The bifid bow of the Aleut *baidarkas* also should be attributed; apparently, to the achievements of Aleut boat construction. This feature, together with the compound composite keel plank, gave the *baidarka* the ability "to bend on the wave." And moreover, apparently, such a bow slicing a side wave was better protected from breaking. On the whole, it is possible fully to agree with the words of Laughlin who characterized the *baidarka* as the "engineering triumph" of the Aleuts.¹⁷

Veniaminov, characterizing the *baidarkas* of the eastern Aleuts, declares that "the perfection of the *baidarkas* belongs to the Aleuts, this is indisputable; one has only to look at the *baidarkas* of the Kodiak Islanders, Aglegmiuts, and other inhabitants of the north, and even their compatriots, the Aleuts living on the islands nearest to Kamchatka, to note at first glance the superiority of the local *baidarkas* in comparison with all others."¹⁸

It is natural that the degree of perfection of these boats and their construction features reflect in each separate case the specialization of the economy. As is known, in the economy of the northern Eskimos a considerable role was played not only by sea hunting, but also by winter hunting for seals by means of "creeping up" to the breathing holes, with nets, and by land hunting for caribou and other land animal species. River and lake fishing had great importance. Moreover, not only the kayak but also a multi-



Baidaras. Sketch by M. D. Levashov. TsGAVMf. 1) Traditional Aleut *baidara*; 2) *baidara* of Russian *promyshlenniki*.

paddle skin boat, the umiak, was used in sea hunting by the northern Eskimos (and also by the Chukchi and Koriak). Thus, whales and other large sea mammals were hunted by large groups of hunters from an umiak, while the Aleuts hunted even whales from their *baidarkas*.

It becomes apparent that the technical perfection of the Aleut *baidarkas* was connected first of all with the specialization of their economy for sea hunting and fishing, and secondly with the specific features of their maritime activities, principally open sea hunting.

If the discussion concerns the differences between the *baidarkas* of the eastern and western Aleuts, then besides the above-mentioned remarks of Veniaminov about the superiority in quality of the *baidarkas* of the Aleuts of the Fox Islands (eastern) over the *baidarkas* of the more western Aleuts, there is nothing to add; we were unable to establish any differences in construc-

tion.^b

The multi-paddle skin boats, *baidaras*, were an integral part of the Aleut way of life prior to the arrival of the Russians. Thus, for example, I. Solov'ev reports a meeting with the inhabitants of the island of Sannakh [Sanak] (eastern Aleutian Islands) on a small neighboring island.¹⁹ The Sannakh people came here with the entire settlement for "the preparation putting up of food for the winter" and informed him that they "always summered here, but during the winter they lived in their settlements on Sannakh." Five *toions* and fifty-one men of their "command" (that is, the male hunters), were here accompanied by wives and children. Each Aleut hunter had his single-seater "small *baidarka*." Besides that, they had five "large *baidaras*, capable of transporting entire families."

^b See the journal of Litke, who noted considerable differences in 1828 (F. Litke, *A Voyage Around the World, 1826-1829*, tr. R. Marshall, ed. R. A. Pierce, Kingston, Ontario: Limestone Press, 1987, 119).

The question of the *baidaras*' construction is somewhat confused. In the museum collections there are no Aleut *baidaras*, nor models of them. Therefore, written sources and sketches assume great significance in determining the shape of these boats. In the literature, they are mentioned only briefly; detailed descriptions or sketches are lacking. Soon after the arrival of the Russians on the islands, the typical Aleut *baidaras* became very rare, and later they disappeared entirely. Another type of multi-paddle skin boat appeared, *baidaras* used by Russian *promyshlenniki*. These *baidaras* were made on the Koriak model. F. I. Soimonov mentioned such boats.²⁰ T. I. Shmalev dwelt in detail on their characteristics:

At first the Russian promyshlenniki carried with them small plank wooden boats, but nowadays they have dropped their use entirely and are using boats resembling the local baidaras; the frames, which resemble those of a small boat or yawl, that is, the keel, bow and stern post, thin ribs (kokorki) and strips (barkhoty), are all made on Kamchatka, then are disassembled and carried aboard the vessel and on reaching the islands, are assembled without any use of iron nails, but for the most part with thongs, instead of planks the boats are covered with sea lion or fur seal skins from which the fur has been scraped; these will not get soaked for a considerable length of time; these baidaras are so strong that the water can even be seen through them from the inside; they are made so large that up to six to eight men can travel in them. Between hunts, they are always dragged up on the shore and dried out; because of their light weight they can be dragged out without much effort, after the hunting is done.²¹

Further, Shmalev writes that:

1) As mentioned above, all frame components are made of wood, namely:

(1) the keel, 8 arshins^c long, 4 vershoks^d wide, and 3 vershoks thick; (2) the lower ends of the stems, each not thicker than 4 vershoks, which are usually attached by their lower ends to the keel ends, while ribs, attached with nails, are placed on top; (3) along the entire keel, bars 3 vershoks wide are placed at intervals of 1 arshin, each bar nailed in the middle with two nails; ribs (kokorki) 5 and 6 vershoks long are attached at the bent ends of each bar; directly on the keel, bent ribs extending from the cross bars to the same height as the side [the gunwales], are attached with baleen the thickness of a goose quill; on the upper end are placed bars or thin poles forming gunwales; instead of thwarts five or six small planks are placed across, the ends of which are then attached to standing ribs with baleen, and these serve as thwarts for the oarsmen.

2) After all of the above-described features have been fastened, the sewn skins of sea lion or sea cow are placed under the keel, the edges are pulled over the gunwale, and those skins or covers are attached to the internal bars or round rods below the gunwales by means of cords or sinews, in the same manner as sails are sewn with double seams; the entire architecture of those baidaras consists of the above-described.²²

The information cited here indicates that Russian *promyshlenniki* at first carried wooden plank boats with them; later they carried only their wooden frames, and only after arrival in the islands assembled the frames and covered them with sea lion, fur seal, and sea cow skins. Some scholars consider as the Aleut type of *baidara* precisely this boat of the Russian *promyshlenniki*, which is basically of the Koriak type.⁴¹ The sketches from the album of M. D. Levashov²³ help to resolve the question. In one of them we

^c One arshin equals 28 inches.

^d One vershok equals 1¾ inches.

can see the representation of a *baidara* of the promyshlenniki with the notation “*baidara* or skin boat.” It has a rounded bow and stern, typical of the Koriak *baidaras*, but has a rudder and oarlocks for the oars and eight small benches for oarsmen, which are missing in the genuine Koriak *baidaras*. In the second sketch a traditional Aleut *baidara* is undoubtedly depicted, although there is no inscription. That *baidara* has the pointed and bifid bow that is also typical of the Aleut *baidarkas*. The stern is also pointed. Benches are absent; there are only narrow cross beams (in early reports it is mentioned that the Aleuts sat directly on the bottom of the *baidara* and not on benches). Levashov’s drawing is of great value because it helps to establish the true shape of the traditional Aleut *baidara*.

It is necessary to note that the illustrations provided in the work of V. I. Iokhel’son represent the type of Aleut *baidaras* in existence at the beginning of the twentieth century.²⁴ In their construction are elements of traditional Aleut *baidaras* and elements introduced by the Russians. These *baidaras* have a pointed bow, but the bow is not bifid; the stern is almost vertical, and there are benches.

Having examined the Aleut watercraft, we have had the opportunity to note that in the island [archipelago] environment, the Aleuts

became excellent seafarers, equipped with highly developed means of seagoing transport. Of course, this required a long period of adaptation in this particular region.



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Notes

1. The Russian *promyshlenniki* called the Aleut single-, two-, and three-hatch boats “*baidarkas*,” and the multi-paddle ones “*baidaras*”; these names for the designation of Aleut boats entered the literature. For the Eskimo boats, their local names were preserved in the literature: “kayak” for the single-hatch and “umiak” for the multi-paddle ones.
2. I. Veniaminov, *Zapiski ob ostrovakh Unalashkinskogo otdela* [Notes on the islands of the Unalaska district], vol. 2 (St. Petersburg, 1840), 240.
3. The remarkable aptitude of the Aleuts for sea hunting was utilized in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by the Russians, who forced them to hunt for fur-bearing sea animals (sea otters and fur seal), first for various trading companies, and later for the Russian-American Company.
4. R. G. Liapunova, “Aleutskie baidarki” [Aleut *baidarkas*], *Sbornik Muzeia antropologii i etnografii*, t. 22 (1964).
5. I. Veniaminov, *Opyt grammatiki aleutsko-lis’evskogo iazyka* [Tentative grammar of the Aleut-Fox language] (St. Petersburg, 1846), 62, 63.
6. Veniaminov, *Zapiski*, 2:7.
7. *Ibid.*, 220, 222.
8. G. A. Sarychev, *Puteshestvie po severo-vostochnoi chasti Sibiri, Ledovitomu moriu i Vostochnomu okeanu* [Voyage to the northeastern part of Siberia, the Arctic Sea, and the Eastern Ocean] (Moscow, 1952), 214.
9. Veniaminov, *Zapiski*, 2:12, 221-222.
10. *Ibid.*, 72.
11. H. C. Fassett, “The Aleut Sea Otter Hunt in the Late Nineteenth Century,” ed. R. F. Heizer, *Anthropological Papers of the University of Alaska* 8:2 (1960), 133.

12. K. Khlebnikov, "Materialy dlia istorii russkikh zasedlenii po beregam Vostochnogo okeana (zapiski K. Khlebnikova ob Amerike)" [Materials for the history of Russian settlement along the shores of the Eastern Ocean (notes of K. Khlebnikov about America)], in *Prilozhenie k Morskому sborniku* [Supplement to *Morskoi sbornik*], no. 3 (St. Petersburg, 1861), 66.
13. "Laftak" here means a skin; "bachelor" refers to a two- to three-year-old non-breeding male sea lion or fur seal, *lakhtak*.
14. The names of the parts are given by analogy with boat terminology, but they do not correspond to it fully.
15. *Istoriko-etnograficheskii atlas Sibiri* [Historical-ethnographic atlas of Siberia], ed. M. G. Levin and L. P. Potapov (Moscow and Leningrad, 1961), 107-130; K. Birket-Smith, *The Eskimos* (London: Methuen, 1936), 83-89; idem, *The Caribou Eskimos: Material and Social Life and their Cultural Position, Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition 1921-24*, vol. 5 (1-2) (Copenhagen, 1929), 172-175; F. Boas, "The Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay," *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History* 15 (1901), 9-13, 76-78; idem, "The Central Eskimo," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology for the Years 1884-1885* (1888), 390-669.
16. W. S. Laughlin, "Human migration and permanent occupation in the Bering Sea area," in *The Bering Land Bridge*, ed. D. M. Hopkins (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), 425.
17. Veniaminov, *Zapiski*, 2:220.
18. N. Ogloblin, "Putevye zametki morekhoda I. M. Solov'eva, 1770-1775. Epizod iz istorii russkikh otkrytii v Vostochnom okeane" [Travel notes of navigator I. M. Solov'ev, 1770-1775. An episode from the history of Russian discoveries in the Eastern Ocean], *Russkaia starina*, book 9 (1892), 744-762.
19. F. I. Soimonov, "K drevnei poslovitse — Sibir — zolotoe dno" [To the ancient saying — Siberia — a gold mine], *Sobranie sochinenii k pol'ze i uveseleniiu sluzhashchikh*, 1761, November-January.
20. T. I. Shmalev, "Pribavleniia k zhurnalu tainogo sovetnika i sibirskogo gubernatora Fedora Ivanovicha Soimonova" [Supplements to the journal of Privy Councilor and Governor of Siberia Fedor Ivanovich Soimonov], TsGADA, f. 199, no. 528, ch. 2, d. 10, l. 10 ob.
21. *Ibid.*, AVPR, f. RAK, op. 888, d. 2, l. 157-158.
22. B. Durham, *Canoes and Kayaks of Western America* (Seattle, 1960), 21.
23. R. G. Liapunova, "Etnograficheskoe znachenie ekspeditsii kapitanov P. K. Krenitsyna i M. D. Levashova na Aleutskie ostrova (1764-1769 gg.)" [Ethnographic significance of the expedition of captains P. K. Krenitsyn and M. D. Levashov to the Aleutian Islands (1764-1769)], *Sovetskaia etnografiia*, 1971, no. 6.
24. W. I. Jochelson, *History, Ethnology and Anthropology of the Aleuts*, *Carnegie Institution of Washington Publication* 432 (Washington, 1933), 56, 58.

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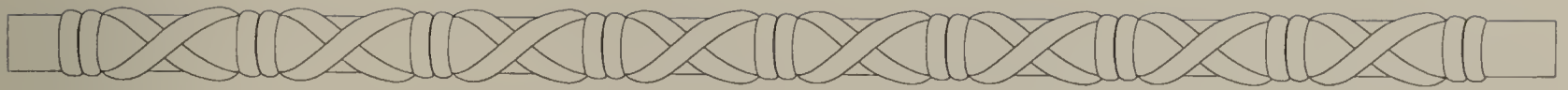
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“A Sad Tale That Must Be Told”

Madeleine Curtis Mixter’s Account of the Loss of the *Ville du Havre*

OLIVER WOLCOTT, JR.

Saturday, November 29, 1873

My dear Uncles!

Just a week ago today the disaster happened which deprived Helen and myself of our parents and you of yours — it is a sad tale but one that must be told...

So starts a letter by an extraordinary young lady who survived a terrifying shipwreck off Newfoundland in November of 1873.¹ When the survivors finally reached Cardiff over a week later, two different copies of the letter would be posted back home to insure that one would get through.² News of the disaster was cabled to America as soon as they reached port, but this would be the first detailed account the uncles would receive.

The writer of the “sad tale” was seventeen-year-old Madeleine Curtis Mixter who, with her nine-year-old sister Helen Kortright Mixter, survived one of the worst maritime disasters of the nineteenth century. This is not so much an account of the shipwreck, nor of the dramatic rescue of the two sisters, but of the exceptional maturity and determination shown by them in an era when there was no radio, no Red Cross, no paternal government agencies to tell them what to do. They found themselves completely on their own, and how they went on with their lives is truly remarkable.

Their ship, the French steamship *Ville du Havre*, left New York bound for Le Havre on Saturday, 15 November 1873. About the same time, the *Loch Earn*, an iron English clipper ship, sailed from London bound for New York. A third ship, the American *Trimountain*, left New York a day later bound for Bristol, England. All three ships were to play an important role in determining the fate of Madeleine and Helen.

The girls were sailing for France with their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Mixter, and their grandfather, Nathaniel W. Curtis, all of Boston. The Mixters had lived in France for several years, but had returned to Boston when Mrs. Mixter’s mother fell ill. Now that she had died, they were going back to France in order to give Mrs. Mixter’s father a change of scenery. The uncles to whom the letter was addressed were Dr. Hall Curtis and Nathaniel W. Curtis, brothers of Mrs. Mixter. The letter continues:

...You will see by the papers of the heavy seas and fogs that we encountered previous to that eventful night. Friday evening the 21st was very fine, the sea calm and the heavens covered with stars, all seemed to favor us. People walked the decks until eleven o’clock, and then separated for bed, each hoping for a quiet night. Mama, Helen and myself all slept in one stateroom in the stern of the ship just over the screw, having been



The Sinking of the Steamship Ville du Havre. Published by Currier and Ives, New York, 1873. The inscription reads: At Sea, in Latitude 47° 21; Longitude 35° 31 November 22nd 1873 on her voyage from New York to Havre by Collision with the British Iron Ship Loch Earn. The Iron Steamship Ville du Havre belonging to the Genl. Transatlantic Co. was 435 ft 6 in. in length 46 ft. beam and 5000 tons burthen and her value \$1,500,000. She left New York Nov. 15th with 125 passengers besides Officers and Crew, the terrible disaster occurred at Two o'clock on the morning of the 22nd. The Loch Earn under full sail struck the Steamer nearly opposite the machinery staving a hole in her side estimated to be 30 ft. long by 12 feet deep, she sunk in fifteen minutes afterwards carrying down nearly all on board, 87 persons only were saved by the boats and those of the Loch Earn, and 226 lives were lost.

obliged to vacate our former ones on account of the water falling on us, nothing having been done to prevent its penetrating the decks. Papa and Grandpapa retained theirs as they were not much troubled by it. In a very short while we were all asleep, the Captain too (who had been up the last three nights) had gone to bed leaving the ship in charge of the second mate...

The 5,000-ton, 435-foot *Ville du Havre*, Captain Surmont commanding, carried one hundred forty passengers and a crew of 173. Several

other accounts of the voyage survive.³ All was not well. Besides the decks leaking into the staterooms, the ship had to stop only four hours out of New York in order to secure machinery being transported in the hold. On Monday, a fog arose. By Tuesday, the ship found herself in heavy fogs and rough seas. The storm continued for three days, breaking a blade on the screw, but by Friday evening the skies cleared and Captain Surmont deemed it was safe to retire to bed.

During the storm, some of the passengers had been apprehensive, "as there seemed to be no organized discipline aboard."⁴ That Friday was calm, and after a pleasant evening in the

saloon, most passengers retired to their cabins for the night.

...At 2 o'clock we were awakened by a crash and a sudden stopping of the steamer. Mama jumped out of bed and rushed to the passage-way crying out "What is the matter?" "Nothing; do not alarm yourself" was the answer from the ship's doctor and others. Some thought a screw had broken but voices were heard from above speaking of a ship. We then knew that a collision had taken place, but whether we were in danger or not was still uncertain...

Captain Surmont was just getting up at 2 a.m. when he saw the *Loch Earn* bearing down on them under full sail. Before he could get to the bridge, the *Ville du Havre* was struck amidships at full force opposite the mainmast — although a steamship, she still retained masts. At first glance, Captain Surmont saw that the damage was "enormous." He ordered the lifeboats cut away and launched. The first, a whaleboat, was sent to the *Loch Earn* to see if she could take aboard the passengers and crew of the *Ville du Havre*. Of the other seven boats, only one was to be launched, which with its crew headed straight for the *Loch Earn*.

...Mama returned that moment with Papa who was dressed and hurried us saying we had better dress and go on deck for we might have to take to the lifeboats. He had seen enough to alarm him on his way to us in the shape of a smash in the center of the ship. Poor Mama was much excited — the rest of us were calm. We went up the staircase by our room and stood at the stern. Then Papa fetched Grandpapa. I shall never forget the dear old gentleman standing there in his gray cap and great coat, his hands quietly in his pockets, smiling at us. Mrs. Bininger, her daughter Fanny and two stewardesses were standing near us. The life boats near us had been cut away — one remained, but no one seemed near it

*and it was not lowered. Some one remarked that it had been stove in. We saw no one on the deck but ourselves — everything was quiet. The sea glittered with the reflection of many stars. We could clearly distinguish the black form of the English ship [the *Loch Earn*] at a short distance behind us...*

After the collision, Captain Robertson of the *Loch Earn* quickly judged his own ship with its iron bulkheads to be sea-worthy, and was not too concerned about the other, larger ship until the arrival of the *Ville du Havre*'s boats. At this point, he ordered his crew to launch his three boats, and also had his crews man the two French boats, as their crews had all clambered aboard the *Loch Earn* when permission was granted to take them on.

...Papa ran to our stateroom to cut the life preservers from under our beds. He tied them around Mama, Helen and myself. On going down again for others, he was unsuccessful in his search. I begged Grandpapa to take mine, but he refused. We stood all together waiting for our end.

The solemn stillness was suddenly broken by the falling of the mast. Then the bow of the vessel disappeared under the water. Papa lifted up his hands to heaven, saying "God has given us many blessings and now we all go down together." Dear Grandpapa answered with a smile. There was a sudden surging of the water, a rushing sound, and I found myself carried down, down, down. I thought I should never rise again...all my soul was merged in one ardent prayer...I rose to the surface, seized a board and lay there...alternately swimming and resting amidst a sea of forms crying for help. Not a vestige of our ship was to be seen. The English was in full sight. I was picked up by one of her boats in about half an hour and carried on board. There I found little Helen and Fanny Bininger. The sailors and Captain

were as kind and tender as if it were their own dear ones. All their wardrobes were placed at our disposal and we are now wearing the flannel shirts, drawers and stockings that they gave us. 3 of their boats, and 2 of ours, were out until 9 the next morning...

In all, only twenty-seven passengers were rescued, plus six officers and fifty-three crew. Not one of the passengers had left by lifeboat. All had been swept into the water or had gone down with the ship and risen. Mrs. Mixter and her father were never seen again. Charles Mixter, a strong swimmer, clung to a spar which he shared with another gentleman and a lady. While the English sailors were pulling them into a lifeboat, he slipped under and was seen no more. The girls were each able to cling to some flotsam, Madeleine to a timber, Helen to a cork ladder. Helen was found fighting desperately, clinging to a piece of wood and crying "I do not wish to be drowned, I will not be drowned."⁵ She was the only survivor of the nineteen children aboard.

...Another ship then hove in sight and seeing the state of the "Loch Earn," whose bow was all stove in, she approached and a parley was held between the captains. The English wanted to send off the French crew and keep the passengers, and they were equally desirous to remain with one who had been so courteous, and of whom, together with her crew, no praise is high enough. The gentlemen, however, thought it dangerous and so we were all transferred to the Trimountain bound

from New York for Bristol and laden with wheat and flour...

Captain W. W. Urquhart of the *Trimountain* previously altered his course because he found himself near the reported location of a huge rock. On his new course, he was called at daylight to see the disabled *Loch Earn*, with its Union Jack

flying upside down. After it was decided to transfer the survivors, another harrowing experience of getting into boats and being lifted aboard on rope chairs had to be endured. It proved to be a wise decision, however. A few days later, the *Loch Earn*, too, would sink and her survivors transferred to a fourth ship, the American three-masted *British Queen*.⁶

On board the *Trimountain*, the first-class passengers shared two small cabins, twelve men in one and eleven women in the other. One of the ladies, Mary Buckley of Rye, New York, wrote:

...Not a toothbrush among us; only such clothing as we had upon us when saved, which has been dried for us, and the flannel underclothing of the sailors. Only two ladies have shoes, the rest are in woolen stockings which the English sailors gave us.... All must use the Captain's comb, but one of the young girls, a wonderful child of seventeen, a Miss Mixter of Boston, combs our hair every morning."

The "wonderful child of seventeen's" letter continues:

...Here we have been since, and no words can express our gratitude to the



Madeleine Curtis Mixter, aged 13. Four years later, she was to survive the wreck and write the extraordinary letter back home. Photo taken December 1869 by L. Sauvager, Fontainebleau. From the collection of the author.

captain for the reception he has given us. All he had was placed at our disposal. The table is superior to that on board the Ville du Havre in quality, though not such a variety. Perhaps I should not say superior, but equal. I am writing on the floor, so when the ship lurches, I slide with it.

We all escaped with a few bruises. Helen is well and happy. She is too young to realize her loss. I feel she will be a sacred charge to me and I pray God to give me strength to direct her aright. Providence has been very merciful to us in saving our lives, and we should never forget how very near death was to us.

Madeleine evidently transferred her parental affection to Captain Urquhart, who later reported, "This generous young lady one day took a ring from her finger and handed it to me as a keepsake."⁷

It took the *Trimountain* over a week to get to Cardiff. On Sunday, 30 November, eight days after the *Ville du Havre* went down, Madeleine continues her letter to her uncles:

Have just passed Lundy's Island, taking a pilot on board who hopes to get us into Cardiff tonight. The letters and telegrams will then be taken ashore and we will land in the morning, go to a furnishing store, and then directly to London, stop a day at Charing Cross Hotel, and then go on to Paris. Two of the gentlemen, Mr. James Bishop and Mr. C. B. Waite, have some money and will make a common purse, pay all expenses and render us our separate accounts. When we

reach Paris, I shall go to Mrs. Munroe's and stay a few days to purchase clothing, for of course, all is lost. If I can not get money at Munroe's without a letter of credit, I shall borrow from Mrs. Munroe or from Mrs. Henry Woods until you, Uncle William, can send me one.

Do not feel any anxiety on our account, dear Uncle, for we are with good kind people and our common misfortune has drawn us very close together.



Helen Kortright Mixter, aged 10. Oliver Wolcott's grandmother, she was the youngest survivor of the *Ville du Havre*. Photo taken July 1874 by Le Jeune, Paris;. From the collection of the author.

Madeleine decided what she and her sister would do, even before they landed. And do it they did, according to an account written from Paris by one of the "good kind people" that escorted her there.⁸ She also had firm ideas about her legal status, although it does not sound as though she intended to let her uncle call the shots. On the contrary, she gives him instructions as to her wishes in a very calm, deliberate manner. It is only when describing the deaths of her grandfather and father that she registers shock, grief, and finally acceptance and forgiveness.

I suppose you are now our guardian, dear Uncle. My desire would be to carry out my dear Father's plan and remain for at least a year at Fontainebleau. I have thought very seriously about it and I think it the best thing for Helen and myself to do. When I reach Paris, I shall write you alone on that subject and others which our parents' decease necessitates. At present the subject is most painful to me.

Please, when you and Uncle Hall have read this send or give its contents

to Uncle William requesting him to notify Aunt Susan and Uncle George as well as all other members of the Mixter family.

I would like you to have my parents' death and age recorded in a Boston, New York and Newport paper. The accident occurred on the night of the 22d of Nov. between two and half-past o'clock. Dear grandfather was not long parted from his wife. He was in the stateroom two days but with all as contented and happy as could be and very peaceful at the end. Tell Mrs. Sigourney that her son was last seen helping to cut away a lifeboat with Messrs. Belknap and Waite. It was feared he was struck by the falling mast. The children were all on deck, very calm and quiet, but the mother no one saw. They were all lost. There were over twenty lovely little children among the first class passengers. Helen was saved when she arose and clung to a cork ladder where Fanny Bininger was also and was soon picked up. Her face eruption has quite disappeared. A Mrs. Swift says that Papa swam up to her and asked to take hold of her life-preserver. She answered "Yes, but do not pull me under." Another gentleman, Mr. Cramer, of New York, also had hold of it. A life boat came up to them and while Mr. C. was being pulled in dear Papa gave a groan and sank at once. I fear it was a cramp — oh! it is so hard to think he was almost saved and then lost again!! No one ever saw Mama or Grandpa in the water.

All the passengers saved either sunk with the ship or were swept off by the waves, some few jumped, but none went by life-boats. The first idea of the English captain had of our danger was seeing a boat full of French sailors come aboard his ship. He thought they had come to save his crew thinking the Lock Earn sinking, he behaved nobly, did all he could do to save us, and it is nearly certain that our steamer was to blame. Poor Captain Surmont looks broken with

grief; he was not to blame.

Our love to all
Madeleine Mixter

No account by Madeleine of the trip to Paris survives. However, we do know about the rest of the trip from a letter by Mr. C. Burritt Waite, sent to his parents from Paris.

35 Rue de Luxembourg, Paris, Dec. 5, 1873

My Dear Father and Mother,

I have just come from Mrs. John Munroe's, where I dined with two of my fellow-sufferers, daughters of Mr. Mixter, of Boston. They lost father, mother, and grandfather, all of whom were on board the Ville du Havre. This family were old friends of Mrs. Munroe, and she took the daughters to herself to care for them. They wished to see some of the survivors, and Mrs. Munroe kindly sent for me to come and dine quietly...

...Now as to my journey from Cardiff. We arrived there at eleven o'clock Sunday night, November 30th, and as soon as we anchored Mr. Bishop and I went ashore with the dispatches from all the saved to be sent to their friends. It took until half-past four o'clock to get them off. I stayed with the operator, at the office, till they were all gone; then I went to the dock to meet the other passengers, who came ashore at five o'clock. We were driven to the Royal Hotel, and from that time till we left, at half-past twelve, were very much engaged. The company furnished all the passengers with clothing, for which they all were very thankful, for we had been almost naked so long. The company also furnished me with money to pay passages to Paris. I started, with all the ladies in charge, for London, where we arrived safely at half-past five o'clock PM and went to the Charing Cross Hotel, where we were made very comfortable. The manager of the hotel positively refused to accept payment for myself and the

eleven ladies, but I insisted upon taking the bill to the Steamship Company, and intend to make them pay for it.... We breakfasted at nine o'clock, then shopped all day, leaving London for Paris at a quarter of nine PM. Messrs. Brown, Shipley & Co. and J. S. Morgan & Co. sent word that any amount of money was at my disposal, but I had no need of any. Wherever any of us went in London the shopkeepers wished to give us everything we wanted to buy; but, of course, we could not accept. We had a calm night on the Channel, but foggy, which made the ladies very nervous, as we but just missed a sailing vessel, frightening us all very much. Arriving at Paris, I gave the ladies all over, at the railway station, to their friends, who thanked me too kindly for my care of them, while I had only done my duty.

Did the shipwreck have a lasting psychological effect on the Mixter girls? It seems the results were mixed. Madeleine, who seemed so calm and composed, vowed never to go to sea again once she got back to Boston. She did, however, often go as far as Nantucket where the

family had a summer home. Maybe she only sailed on clear days.

Helen, on the other hand, grew to love Paris and the people she met there, and consequently was to visit Europe regularly all her life. She and her husband took the grand tour when they first married, and were regular visitors to Paris, Monte Carlo, Italy and England. After separating from her husband in the early 1900's, she lived in Venice with her three daughters, bringing them back to America every summer to be with their father while she visited her Boston family and friends. The ocean was her highway, and perhaps every time she sailed, she repeated the determined vow she first uttered in 1873: "I do not wish to be drowned, I will not be drowned."



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Notes

1. A typed copy of this letter is among family papers inherited from the author's grandmother, Helen Mixter Appleton.
2. A hand-written copy titled "2nd Copy On board Ship Trimountain, Satterday [sic] Nov. 29th/73" is also in Oliver Wolcott's family papers. That this is a copy is also evident by the misspelling of "Hellen."
3. Among family papers are copies of or excerpts from the following: W. W. Urquhart, Skipper of the *Trimountain*, *Reminiscences — The Merchant Marine — Ocean Travel in the 1860's & Now*; N. Weiss, *Personal Recollections of the Wreck of the Ville-du-Havre and the Loch-Earn*, translated from the French (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph, 1875), 208.; letter from Mrs. Mary Adams Buckley, passenger on the *Ville du Havre*, to her mother, written 28 November 1873 aboard the *Trimountain*; Letter from C. Burrett Waite, passenger on the *Ville du Havre*, to his parents, written

in two parts, one 28 November 1873 aboard the *Trimountain*, with the second part written 5 December from France; newspaper accounts of the disaster from the 20 December 1873 *Boston Post* and others.

4. Buckley letter.
5. Urquhart Reminiscences, also quoted in Weiss, *Personal Recollections*, 122.
6. The saga of the two *Ville du Havre* survivors who were picked up by the *Loch Earn* but were deemed too weak to be transferred to the *Trimountain* is described in Weiss, *Personal Recollections*, 134–205. After drifting off-course, the *Loch Earn* was lashed by a three-day storm. Just before sinking, the ship was sighted by the *British Queen* (Captain Marsters), bound from Philadelphia to Antwerp with a cargo of petroleum. After surviving the storm, the *British Queen* was becalmed several days in the English Channel, finally off-loading the *Loch Earn* survivors

to a pilot-boat out of Plymouth. Waite says "the two-shipwrecked voyagers, in passing from New York to Paris, had taken twenty-three days; and been in two steam-packets [including the channel-boat from Dover

to Calais], two sailing-vessels, and one pilot-boat — five vessels in all, besides three boats."

7. Urquhart, *Reminiscences*.
8. Waite letter.



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Six Months with the Seventh Fleet

ROBERT ERWIN JOHNSON

On a March morning in 1944, I paused outside the gate of the US Coast Guard Receiving Station on Government Island, Alameda, California, to study a small warship fitting out beside the pier. She was a frigate, the *Brownsville* I think, one of the class of vessels to which I hoped to be assigned. I was a twenty-one year old quartermaster second class, veteran of more than two-and-a-half years in the CGC *Haida*, and I was tired of bobbing around a weather patrol station in the North Pacific Ocean. I requested a transfer to one of these new antisubmarine vessels.

I soon learned that I was unlikely to be ordered to a frigate because crews for all had been made up, so I spent a week and more at Government Island. One afternoon, a frigate steamed into the General Engineering shipyard across the channel. She was the *Eugene* (PF 40), which, as I knew from my perusal of the visual signal book, was the only frigate named for a city in my native Oregon. Since she had come in for post-shakedown availability, the *Eugene* obviously had a full crew — but she sent her leading quartermaster ashore for medical treatment and I was the senior unassigned man of that rate at the receiving station. Within a few hours, I reported on board my second ship, only to find that she was to have an evaporator installed and would not be ready for sea for some weeks.

The interval at least gave me an opportunity to become acquainted with the ship and her company before she sailed. The *Eugene* was one of seventy-five vessels of the Tacoma class, built to a modified British design in American yards and manned by the Coast Guard — twenty-one sisters were transferred to the Royal Navy as the

Colony class. They were similar in size to the more numerous long-hull destroyer escorts (DEs), which they also resembled in armament — three 3-inch 50-caliber guns, two twin 40-mm mounts, nine 20-mms, a Hedgehog, eight K-guns, and two depth-charge tracks — and in their 20-knot speed. Where the DEs were powered by steam turbines or diesels, the frigates had triple-expansion reciprocating engines, a number of which had alignment or other problems that led to an undeserved poor reputation for the entire class. I do not remember any trouble with the *Eugene*'s engines or boilers, although her steering engine jammed while she was crossing the Pacific and remained unreliable despite repeated visits by the manufacturer's representative.

Among the ship's company, my fellow quartermasters were my first concern: John Atchley, a quiet, pleasant piano salesman from Springfield, Missouri; Warren James, a sprightly New Yorker with whom I quickly struck up a close friendship; and George Landry, a cheeky striker, the shortest man on board and totally unabashed by the fact. I got along well with all, but my relationship with Paul Locker, the senior quartermaster, was somewhat strained. Locker was, like me, a second-class petty officer. He had served only in river buoy tenders and so had no seagoing experience when he joined the *Eugene*. His knowledge of charts and navigation was small, and he soon decided that I was a potential rival, to which I no doubt contributed by flaunting my vast experience. Locker's opinion seemed to be confirmed when I was made responsible for all



USS *Eugene* (PF 40) off Los Angeles after commissioning in January 1944.

of the chart work, a duty ordinarily assigned to the senior quartermaster.

I made other friends as well, mostly in C Division, but should I attempt to list their names fifty years later, some would inevitably be omitted. Hence they shall remain nameless.

The captain, Commander Clifford R. MacLean, was a graduate of the Coast Guard Academy, but I think that all of the other officers were reservists or former warrant or petty officers, temporarily commissioned. Those with whom I would have the closest contact were Lieutenant Henry T. Hilliard, executive officer and navigator, a handsome and highly competent Texan; Lieutenant Robert F. Bullard, C Division officer, whose tolerant nature would be tested in the future; and Lieutenant (j.g.) Frederick J. Marsden, assistant navigator, whom we thought rather too "regulation".

In port, I stood the usual six-hour gangway watches. One of them soon after I joined the *Eugene* remains a vivid memory. A few of her

men were unhappy at having been assigned to the ship when they felt that they deserved shore duty. One of them had made it clear that he had no intention of sailing with us. He had "gone over the hill," only to be returned to the ship. He was supposed to be handcuffed to his bunk at night, but the kindly master-at-arms, accepting his assurance that he would not attempt to leave the ship, removed the handcuffs. During the mid to 0600 watch, the bow sentry, armed with an unloaded rifle, summoned me from the gangway to report that this individual was going ashore via the bow mooring line. I dashed forward and ordered him to return, which he said was impossible — he could not turn without falling. Making a show of pushing a clip of bullets into my .45 automatic, I told him to get onto the pier and come back on board by the gangway. If he tried to run, I would fire.

"You wouldn't shoot me!" he exclaimed.

"How do you know? I've been on board only a few days, and you don't know me," I replied.



USS *Eugene* (PF 40) off Los Angeles after commissioning in January 1944.

He also did not know that, although I had carried a .45 during countless hours of gangway watch in the *Haida*, I had never fired one, or that my intention was to fire into the air should I have to shoot. In short, my bluff succeeded. The would-be deserter left the ship a day or so later, on someone else's watch. Whether he was ever apprehended, I do not know — we never saw him again.

In due course, the evaporator was installed and other repairs were completed. On the morning of 22 May, the *Eugene* stood out into San Francisco Bay for compass and radar calibration. We assumed that we would soon be

on our way to the war zone, but days passed and rumors about our destination spread. A number of Marines reported on board for transportation to Pearl Harbor, and then they were sent ashore again — curious. Finally, on 29 May, the whaleboat returned from one last trip to the beach, the windlass began the lengthy process of heaving the anchor chain in, and when the anchor was aweigh, Mr. Hilliard set a course out through the Golden Gate — the *Eugene* was on her way to Australia by way of American Samoa.

I had the watch as the ship stood out, and so did not witness the scene of destruction on the mess deck when she encountered the heavy swells typical off the Farallon Islands. The evening meal reportedly ended in chaos, with sea

sickness taking a heavy toll. In the wheelhouse, I noted that the *Eugene* did not seem unduly lively — indeed, the frigates were perhaps the most sea-kindly of the US Navy's World War II escort vessels.

Quartermaster watches underway differed from those in the old *Haida* in two regards. First, the officers of the deck and the signalmen stood their watches on the open bridge above the wheelhouse, so that usually there were no more than three men — the quartermaster, a striker, and the helmsman — in the wheelhouse. Rudder and annunciator orders were transmitted from the bridge by a voice tube. Second, the *Eugene* streamed a taffrail log, which required that the quartermaster make hourly trips to the fantail to take the log reading. This I thought unnecessary, for she also had a pitometer log, which could be read in the combat information center (CIC) just abaft the wheelhouse. I voiced this opinion to my fellows — unwisely, as it turned out, for the taffrail log line parted during a night watch only a few days out of San Francisco. Inevitably, I was suspected of having cut the log line. I was, however, completely innocent, if only because it had never occurred to me that I might do so.

Our passage to Samoa featured beautiful weather and only the slightest of swells. Sunbathing became a popular pastime. Captain MacLean thought it prudent to warn that prolonged exposure to the tropical sun could result in severe sunburn, adding that anyone who was unfit for duty because of sunburn would be put on report. A day or two later, he himself became the first victim, having gone to sleep while sunbathing on a cot on the fore-castle. A revised warning notice was posted on the bulletin board, with no mention of punishment for those suffering from sunburn.

The tropical heat brought other problems. As I wrote my parents, "It is quite warm here — so warm in fact that it is difficult to write because everything you touch gets wet. Have been sleep-

ing on deck recently although the nightly rain squalls are rather dampening. The ventilation on this bucket is not all that it might be." The last was an understatement. The frigates were notoriously hot below, in part because of a ventilation system better suited to the North Atlantic Ocean, in part because of the designers' foresight in putting the galley on the mess deck, immediately adjacent to the crew's quarters.

The *Eugene* crossed the Equator on 7 June with the traditional ceremonies. Succeding days passed without incident until the early morning of 12 June, when a gyro compass repeater error was reported. Seeking to ascertain when the malfunction had occurred, Mr. Hilliard found that Locker, who had the preceding watch, had neglected the required half-hourly check of the steering repeater against the magnetic standard compass. This was a court-martial offense — Locker was fined but not reduced in rating. I was promoted to first class to become the leading quartermaster. Locker, quite understandably, took this as a personal affront. I think that we were both pleased when he was transferred to a small, Coast Guard-manned Army cargo vessel in New Guinea a few weeks later.

Soon after noon that day, the *Eugene* picked up a pilot and stood into Pago Pago, Tutuila, American Samoa. A two-day stay permitted both watches to go ashore on liberty, where the sailors found that the magnificent scenery was Pago Pago's greatest attraction.

With the Fita Fita Guard band, dressed in white hats, skivvy shirts, and white skirts bearing blue rate insignia, playing a farewell on the pier, the frigate unmoored and steamed out on 14 June. She crossed the 180th meridian three days later, entering the Domain of the Golden Dragon, albeit without ceremony. In due course, all hands received Golden Dragon certificates signed by Captain MacLean. Mine was redundant. I had crossed that line more than a year earlier when

the *Haida* escorted a convoy to Amchitka in the Aleutians, although no certificates had been provided on that occasion.

On 23 June, radar made landfall on the coast of Australia, distant fifty-eight miles, and the radiomen picked up a commercial station playing a children's song, "The Little Aborigine." Thus entertained, the *Eugene* made a cautious approach to the Great Barrier Reef — "Damnedest piece o' navigation that's in all the Seven Seas," according to British poet Lewis R. Freeman. Despite the rain-limited visibility, she negotiated Grafton Passage without difficulty and moored in Cairns harbor that afternoon.

For reasons that are no longer apparent, we spent a week there. The northernmost town of any size in Queensland, Cairns had the air of a frontier settlement, quite hot and dusty even during the antipodean winter. Recreational facilities were limited and became even less adequate several days later when three more frigates stood in from Los Angeles.

Without much regret, the *Eugene* weighed anchor during the afternoon of 1 July and, we thought, headed for the war zone. A day out, the captain gave us his view of the duty that awaited the ship, concluding that "it would separate the men from the boys," a profundity that led to some hilarity and disrespectful comments in the crew's quarters. And when she anchored in Milne Bay at the southeastern tip of New Guinea on 3 July, we learned that the *Eugene's* final training would not begin until the fifth.

That day, we fired at aerial targets with somewhat more success than I expected, and succeeding days brought shore bombardment and firing at surface targets. I heard more gunfire in the five days of battle practice at Milne Bay than I had experienced in my three years of previous service. Her training completed, the frigate escorted a small convoy of landing ships and craft to Bougainville in the Solomons, then proceeded alone to Cape Cretin, New Guinea.

On 17 July, the *Eugene* was to join the Australian frigate *Barcoo* to screen the escort carrier *Altamaha* (CVE 18) during her passage to Manus Island in the Admiralty group. When it



The *Eugene* underway in San Francisco Bay for fire and collision drills, May 1944.

came time to weigh anchor, however, the whale-boat was gone. The officer of the deck, apparently unaware of the time of departure, had sent it ashore to pick up mail. Captain MacLean's reaction may be imagined. The boat was ordered to return immediately, to be picked up as the frigate stood out. Retrieving a boat "on the run" was a feat of seamanship I would not have thought our deck force capable of. My shipmates proved me wrong, and the *Eugene* was only slightly late in reaching the rendezvous.

With a frigate on either bow, the *Altamaha* headed for her destination. For a time, all went well, then the *Eugene*'s forward boiler feed pump malfunctioned, causing the boiler to be shut down. The engine to which it supplied steam slowed and then stopped, and perhaps the temperamental steering engine also acted up. At any rate, the ship veered across the escort carrier's bow, forcing her to turn to avoid collision. The black gang soon had the engine cross-connected to Number Two boiler, and the *Eugene* was brought under control. This mishap, together with our tardiness in reaching the rendezvous, brought a reprimand from the *Altamaha*: "Your movements have been deplorable." Flashed over in plain language, the message was soon common knowledge, which cannot have helped the captain's feelings.

Thereafter, the *Eugene* behaved properly. The feed pump was soon repaired, and when the carrier released her escorts off Seeadler Harbor, she sent another blinker message: "All is forgiven." Presumably her commanding officer had reflected that the errant frigate was still a "boot" and so not to be held to the highest standards.

After a week at anchor, during which liberty parties made the acquaintance of Los Negros Island beaches and enjoyed rationed warm beer, the frigate set a course for Hollandia with several Seventh Fleet passengers embarked. Standing into Humboldt Bay the next day, she went alongside the *El Paso* (PF 41). Commander John L. Steinmetz, commanding Escort Division 29, transferred his flag to the *Eugene*. This event, while anticipated, was not entirely welcome, for the "commodore's"

staff consisted of an ensign and several enlisted men, for whom quarters had to be found. These were veterans of some four months in the war zone, as they did not hesitate to tell us. The normal antipathy of ship's company for staff was exacerbated.

The next day found us escorting four ships to Mios Woendi in the Padaido Islands. It was an overnight passage. We spent only one night there, too little time to sample the delights of Mios Woendi, which would become my favorite among all the points visited by the *Eugene* — a beautiful lagoon with gently sloping beach and relatively few military personnel.

If Mios Woendi was my personal tropical paradise, our next assignment, antisubmarine patrol off Noemfoor Island, was undoubtedly my least favored duty. I had become familiar with "ping patrol" in the *Haida*, but in the Aleutians it was of no moment that one was steaming at speeds too low for adequate ventilation, and the old cutter had usually spent only two or three days patrolling before joining another convoy. On this occasion, we sweltered for more than a week on patrol. Obviously, the submarines against which we were guarding were nowhere in the vicinity. At least a Japanese air raid just before midnight on 30 July enlivened things for a short time.

At noon the next day, the *Eugene* left her patrol area to assist an Allied aircraft that had gone down, only to have a landing craft get there first. Subsequent nights brought more air raids. Our slowness was an advantage then, for Japanese pilots did not notice the frigate's wake, nor did Captain MacLean attract their attention by opening fire. Several friendly aircraft crashed during the following days. On 5 August, we finally succeeded in assisting one. The whale-boat returned from a reef with the apparently unscathed pilot.

When relieved, the frigate returned to Humboldt Bay to refuel. It was probably during this interval at Hollandia that the captain, desiring to enhance the ship's close-in anti-aircraft capability, had two Army Air Force .50 caliber machine guns mounted on the clipping room just forward

of the wheelhouse. We were not pleased with this acquisition. Those manning the guns felt very vulnerable in their exposed position, and they obstructed the view from the wheelhouse. Worst of all, the captain was thought to have traded several cases of our beer for the guns.

Two nights at anchor, and then we took an LST to Maffin Bay, Wakde Island, where the *Eugene* relieved a DE on ping patrol. Occasional gunfire on the island reminded us that a war was on, and early one morning radar detected a small craft under-way seven miles to the westward. The port director at Maffin Bay confirmed that no friendly vessels were in the vicinity, so the *Eugene* closed and illuminated the target by searchlight. Alas! It was only a Japanese barge wrecked on the beach. We were dismissed from battle stations, and the ship resumed her patrol.

One type of monotony succeeded another on 16 August, when the frigate headed for Mios Woendi with an Army tug towing four barges. We learned to dread such convoys. They were so slow, and barges frequently went adrift and had to be recovered. Moreover, there was no liberty at Mios Woendi on this occasion. After releasing the convoy off the lagoon, the *Eugene* steamed to Sorido, Biak, for ping patrol.

Reports that Japanese artillery was sited on nearby Soepiori Island brought a change of duty almost a week later. The whaleboat ferried seven Army officers from the beach. The frigate proceeded to Rani Island, where they conferred with native scouts, thence to Sawendi, Soepiori, to bombard the supposed battery. As the ship felt her way between reefs clearly visible in the calm sea, we studied the village through binoculars. Perched on stilts over the water, it looked peaceful and deserted. None-



C Division mustered aft of the stack, May 1944. Note twin 40-mms on either side and stub mast. Robert Johnson is second on left; first on left is probably Warren E. James.

theless, the *Eugene* opened fire with 3-inch and 40-mm guns. Some sighted the muzzle flashes of return fire, others thought them to be the frigate's projectiles ricocheting off rocks — certainly there were no shell splashes around the ship. Cease fire was ordered after ten minutes, and then, embarrassingly, the *Eugene* was found to be aground. Her engines were stopped because the screws had struck a coral reef. This mishap was attributed to faulty charts and an ebb tide. Fortunately, the ship had been making little more than steerage way when she grounded.

Refloating her proved to be a simple matter. All hands except those at essential control stations mustered on the forward deck. This living ballast raised the fantail somewhat. "All ahead one-third," "Stop," and the *Eugene* slid off the reef none the worse for the experience. As she headed seaward, the aft 3-inch gun continued the bombardment until Sawendi was out of range. Proceeding next to Pimonsbury Point, she spent forty-five minutes shelling garden plots and surrounding habitations thought to harbor Japanese troops, before returning to ping patrol off Biak.

Further respite came only two days later. The *Eugene* refueled at Mios Woendi, then headed westward with the SS *Mandan Victory*. Off

Sorido, the *El Paso* and several LSTs joined us en route to Cape Sansapor at the northwestern tip of New Guinea. American forces had landed there against light resistance almost a month earlier, but the mopping-up operation had dragged on. After delivering the convoy on 26 August, the *Eugene* relieved a destroyer on ping patrol. Japanese air attacks brought us to battle stations repeatedly during the next several nights. After one of these attacks, we heard that we had been credited with shooting down an enemy aircraft. We had to decline the honor — the *Eugene* had not opened fire!

A number of us were allowed to go ashore during the five days we spent off Sansapor, and I think that all returned with the feeling that, however boring and uncomfortable life on board the frigate might be, it was vastly superior to that of infantrymen fighting the Japanese in western New Guinea.

After enjoying a week at anchor at Mios Woendi, the *Eugene* received orders to support a combat landing. Embarking Army personnel, including the major general commanding the 41st Division and two brigadier generals at Sorido on 6 September, joined by the *Orange* (PF 43) and troop-laden landing craft, she headed for Korrido on Soepiori Island. The force separated the next morning, the *Orange* bombarding Napido preparatory to a landing there, while the *Eugene* closed Korrido and opened fire somewhat later. After shelling the village for twenty minutes, she ceased fire. Aircraft spent a half-hour bombing and strafing before the landing craft put the troops ashore. Apparently there was no opposition — our Army passengers and ship's officers went ashore "to look around" within an hour. All hands had an opportunity to survey the "battlefield" before the *Eugene* returned to Biak.

The Korrido invasion was obviously unimportant, achieving no mention in either Army or Navy operational histories, but one wonders why a single frigate was assigned to provide fire support for such an operation if opposition was expected. Perhaps the Seventh Fleet simply discounted Army estimates as a matter of course.

At any rate, the ship's photographer went out in the whaleboat to record the invasion for posterity, and Captain MacLean had an account prepared for the *Coast Guard Magazine*, in which it appeared before the ship returned to the States.

After Korrido, the *Eugene* spent two days surveying Bepondi Island north of Soepiori, an exercise that resulted in a chart on which prominent geographical features were identified by "*Eugene*" names. In due course, this chart was reproduced and distributed to ships of the Seventh Fleet — without the names we had bestowed! We obviously had no right to name bays and headlands of a Dutch possession without permission.

Returning to Mios Woendi for fuel, the *Eugene* steamed on to Humboldt Bay in company with the *Van Buren* (PF 42). The two went alongside the destroyer tender *Dobbin* (AD 3) on 13 September to clean boilers, the *Van Buren* mooring outboard of her sister.

Three days later, I was mounting the vertical ladder to the bridge when a shout caused me to look over my shoulder. What a shock! I almost lost my grip on the ladder when I saw the bow of a Liberty ship towering over me. The SS *Mariscal Sucre* had suffered a steering casualty and seemed to be about to remove the sterns of the two frigates. As it was, the big ship had reversed her engine in time to avert serious damage, although her bow cut into the *Van Buren*'s port quarter well aft. The *Dobbin*'s shipfitters quickly made the damage good, to the disappointment of the frigate's men, who had hoped that she would be sent to Brisbane for repairs. The *Eugene* was almost unscathed, although a cane fender between the two frigates left a dent in her shell plating.

After eight days alongside the *Dobbin*, during which we enjoyed ice cream and a variety of other luxuries the big tender could provide, we cast off and steamed to an anchorage in Humboldt Bay, where we spent another six days. The respite was welcome, not least because a movie screen was rigged topside, and we could see a nightly film. The Seventh Fleet had a sizeable film library, and one of the first priorities on

entering port was to swap films with other ships. None was to be retained, but somehow *Casablanca* became the *Eugene*'s property — it was shown repeatedly. I do not remember that we ever tired of it.

Some form of entertainment was desirable, because life was hardly attractive. The oppressive heat and humidity sapped our enthusiasm. The food was generally unappetizing, with mutton and rice served much too often, and most of us had lost a considerable amount of weight. The arrival of a refrigerated store ship was a major event. By the time the fresh provisions from her cargo holds had been distributed, however, there was usually little left for the escorts, which were said to rank with but after landing craft on the food priority list. One could go to the beach occasionally for two bottles of warm beer, but the number of troops and ships' personnel far exceeded the rudimentary recreational facilities.

By this time, plans for the invasion of Leyte in the Philippine Islands were far advanced. Commodore Steinmetz returned from a conference, bringing a chart showing the projected landing beaches, which he directed me to post in the chartroom. It was stamped "Confidential," but an order from the commodore was not mine to question. A few days later, Rear Admiral Daniel E. Barbey, commanding the Seventh Fleet amphibious forces, visited the ship. Looking into the chartroom, he noticed the chart. "Who put that there?" "The commodore, sir." "Get the commodore." After informing the division commander that the admiral wished to see him, I paused in the wheelhouse. When I returned to the chartroom, both officers had gone — and so had the chart.

I have since wondered if Admiral Barbey's purpose had been to determine the *Eugene*'s readiness for a special mission, that of screening the fast transports that landed Rangers on the islands off Leyte before the invasion. If so, Commodore Steinmetz's indiscretion may have been a factor in the choice of the *Bisbee* (PF 46) and the *Gallup* (PF 47) for the mission.

A short time earlier, the commodore had

informed me that the clock on the flag cabin bulkhead had stopped, which I heard with dismay. As leading quartermaster, I was the clock repairman, yet my experience was limited to some unsuccessful experiments on old alarm clocks during my boyhood. I removed the clock with some trepidation and took it to the chartroom. Fortunately, the problem proved to be obvious and easy to set right. I noticed as well that the bell-striking mechanism had been disconnected. With newfound confidence, I corrected this before returning the clock to its proper place. Less than a half-hour later, the PA system boomed: "Johnson, quartermaster first, report to the flag cabin on the double." I did so, to be told by an irate commodore to "Disconnect those goddamned bells!"

Interest in the Philippines led to a request for the relevant chart portfolio, which I could not find. Apparently, it had been unavailable when the *Eugene* was commissioned, and Mr. Hilliard had not been informed of its absence when he reported on board three weeks later. Locker presumably had not known. Because the weekly Notices to Mariners had nothing pertaining to navigational conditions in enemy waters, I had no reason to consult charts of the Philippines. Efforts to acquire spare charts from other ships were fruitless. We could only request that the portfolio be sent from the States by air mail. Meanwhile, Mr. Hilliard would have to "make do" with the small scale charts that we had.

On 27 September, the *Eugene* escorted LSTs to a practice firing area, and her own gunners had an opportunity to refresh their unused skills by firing at an aircraft-towed sleeve. Three days later, she steamed eastward to Langemak and Cape Cretin, whence she returned to Hollandia with four LSTs on 8 October.

Arriving off Seeadler Harbor with another group of LSTs soon after dawn on 12 October, we had a "ringside seat" as the Seventh Fleet's major warships stood out of the anchorage bound for the Philippines. It was an impressive sight, especially when we reflected that these were actually the "second team." The newer battleships



Seventh Fleet publicity photograph made while the *Eugene* was at anchor in Humboldt Bay, New Guinea. Robert Johnson is at the wheel, his battle station; John W. Atchley is on left.

and fast carriers all sailed in the Third Fleet.

The *Eugene* returned to Hollandia not long thereafter. On 23 October, three days after A-day at Leyte, she headed for the Philippines with a twenty-nine ship convoy escorted by most of CortDiv 29 — the *El Paso*, *Van Buren*, and *Orange*, the first and only time that all worked together. On 28 October, five destroyers joined the screen, and radar made landfall on Leyte early the next morning. We steamed into San Pedro Bay in heavy rain soon after noon to find "Condition Red" in effect.

Condition Red (attack imminent) would be the normal condition for the next few days, as Japanese aircraft seemed to belie the claim that their nation's air power had virtually been destroyed. Spending much of the time at battle stations was wearing, especially because of the heat — the *Eugene* seemed to absorb it during the day and radiate it at night. San Pedro Bay was a good deal farther from the Equator than

Humboldt Bay, and winter was approaching. Nonetheless, it seemed hotter.

We learned that a typhoon was nearing Leyte that first afternoon. Full-powered ships were ordered to put to sea; transports, cargo ships, and the like would ride it out at anchor. We were somewhat insulted when frigates were listed in the latter category. The typhoon struck soon after midnight, and the *Eugene* began to drag her one anchor — the other had been jammed in its hawsepipe when leaving an earlier anchorage. Calling the special sea detail, the captain prepared to get underway. Conditions on the bridge, my station, were indescribable, the wind howling and the rain so heavy that it seemed almost solid. Breaking out the anchor proved to be difficult. Its shank was badly bent when it cleared the water. Under-powered or not, the *Eugene* stood out of San Pedro Bay. Two hours later, she encountered an LCVP that had broken loose from an attack transport. The worst of the storm had passed, so it was taken in tow and turned over to the boat pool at Dulag later that morning.

Most ships had dragged anchor during the typhoon, but the *Eugene's* plight was the more serious because she no longer had a serviceable anchor. That was soon remedied. A heavy dip rope was bent to the jammed bower anchor, led under the forefoot, and made fast to the damaged anchor. The damaged anchor was let go, and its weight yanked the jammed anchor out of its hawsepipe so easily that one wondered why it had not been cleared earlier.

The frigate finished an eventful day on ping patrol off Dulag and returned to San Pedro Bay on 31 October. Frequent air raids made the anchorage uncomfortable, so we were as happy to join the *San Pedro* (PF 37) and the *Orange* patrolling in Leyte Gulf. The sight of a column of black smoke offshore was sobering — we learned later that it had marked the funeral pyre

of the destroyer *Abner Read* (DD 526). Air attacks continued, but the Japanese pilots sought more important targets than the three frigates.

Relieved by destroyers on 3 November, we returned to San Pedro Bay, whence the *Eugene* sailed that afternoon, leading the escort of a convoy bound for Hollandia. This would be remembered as one of our worst convoys, not because of enemy action, but because it contained a number of smaller landing craft and Army tugs. Keeping such a heterogeneous conglomeration of vessels in formation taxed the ability of the escort leader. By day, it was not so bad. At night, we had to keep track of them by radar, which was difficult with so many pips on the PPI scope.

Although two of the tugs were missing when the convoy reached Humboldt Bay on the morning of 9 November, Commodore Steinmetz showed no concern. The *Eugene* refueled and then anchored to await her next assignment, which was not long in coming. Soon after midnight, she received orders to find her missing charges. Cursing as we stumbled to special sea detail stations, we wondered why the orders had to come after most of the ship's company had turned in. We had not enjoyed an uninterrupted night's sleep in more than two weeks. Radar located the stragglers about three hours later, chugging along the coast without any real idea of where they were. The frigate shepherded them into Humboldt Bay before noon and returned to her anchorage.

Another convoy departed for Leyte two days later, with the *Eugene* escort flag once more. The passage was uneventful, except for the second day out, when lookouts spotted a drifting mine. Neither rifle bullets nor 20-mm projectiles sank it, so Captain MacLean ordered the 40-mms to fire, somewhat to our concern because the frigate seemed rather close. When the mine exploded, fragments of metal pelted her deck, fortunately hitting no one. These were sought eagerly as souvenirs, and although the captain ordered that they be turned in for use in identifying the mine, I doubt that he received many.

We delivered the convoy in San Pedro Bay

on the morning of 19 November. That afternoon, we joined the escort of a large convoy returning to Hollandia. An air raid while the convoy was forming caused only slight delay, and the next morning a lone Japanese bomber attacked from ahead. The *Eugene* was on the convoy's quarter, so we were spectators as the enemy flew through anti-aircraft fire to drop its bomb on an LST. We could see it clearly. The LST's diesels belched smoke as she strove desperately to avoid the deadly missile. After one of the longest intervals I have ever experienced, the bomb splashed harmlessly close aboard, while the flaming bomber plummeted into the sea. A DE called the screen commander (not Commodore Steinmetz) on TBS: "I'd like to claim part of that plane. Our 20s were hitting it." We cheered the response: "That plane belongs to the LST. She earned it." That was the only attack on a *Eugene*-escorted convoy, proof in our eyes that she was a lucky ship.

When the convoy steamed into Humboldt Bay on 25 November, we were pleased to see the *Rudderow* (DE 224) among the ships at anchor. For some weeks, we had known that the frigates were to be relieved by faster steam-powered DEs with 5-inch guns, and the *Rudderow* had recently been identified as the *Eugene*'s relief. The Seventh Fleet, however, was not yet ready to dispense with our services. We were granted a respite of more than two weeks, and on 13 December, the *Eugene* stood out as one of six escorts screening a large convoy.

Two days out, she was ordered alongside a merchant ship to receive a man requiring medical attention. One of her armed guard, he was suffering from appendicitis. I do not remember if our doctor operated. Later that day, five LSTs joined the convoy, bringing it to more than one hundred ships. Two destroyers strengthened the escort on 20 December, the day before the convoy arrived in San Pedro Bay.

We spent a week at Leyte on this last visit, which featured the usual air raids. None endangered the *Eugene*, but her officers attending a Christmas party ashore reportedly had to spend

much of the time in foxholes. A number of Army and Navy passengers, a Seventh Fleet damage control specialist among them, boarded the ship, some for transportation to the States.

Finally, on 28 December, the *Eugene* and the *El Paso* stood out for Hollandia, picking up a three-ship convoy two hours later. The next day passed without event. As usual when at sea, we went to battle stations — “dawn GQ” — before daybreak on 30 December. Almost simultaneously, at 0544, fire was reported in the battery room. Movie film stored therein had ignited, which was hardly surprising — that compartment, just abaft the engine room, was one of the hottest in the ship. The watertight door was open, so the fire spread. Electrical power failed at 0600, stopping the engine room blowers. The resulting heat and fumes from the burning film forced the abandonment of the engine room within fifteen minutes. When the engines stopped, so did the boiler feed pumps, causing the boilers to be shut down. The *Eugene* lost way, rolling in the low swell.

In the wheelhouse, the quartermaster logged this information as it was reported, while I stood at the now useless wheel. Finally, I was ordered to send a man to assist in fighting the fire, then another and another, until I was alone in the wheelhouse. Then Mr. Marsden remarked by voice tube, rather sarcastically: “It looks like you’ll have to go, too, Johnson.” I thought this unfair; the leading quartermaster properly left his station last.

Obviously, Captain MacLean did not realize his ship’s predicament, otherwise he would have ordered all hands to fire stations without delay. Pressure on the water mains had been lost when the engines stopped, but the frigate had four gasoline-powered “handy billy” portable pumps. We heard later that the damage control officer-passenger had taken charge of the firefighting, directing the streams from two of the pumps against the flames while the other two were used to cool ammunition in nearby magazines. Of course, water could not be pumped into the ship indefinitely without affecting her stability, so “bucket brigades” were organized to bail water

out.

I reported to one of these and, as a senior petty officer, went to the head of the line on the mess deck. Standing in water to mid-calf, I filled a bucket and passed it to the man behind me, then reached back to the left for an empty bucket, filled it, and passed it back with my right hand. Meanwhile, perspiration, smoke, and fumes made my eyes burn atrociously, but there was no time to wipe them. Filling buckets did not require sight, and it was totally dark on the mess deck. Fifteen minutes in that heat was enough. When relieved, we stumbled topside to gasp the invigorating fresh air and await our next turn below.

At 0700, the fire was reported to be under control; emergency repairs began. Working with portable lights and in heat so intense that they too had to be relieved every fifteen minutes, members of the black gang raised steam in Number Two boiler. Thanks to the rugged simplicity of her reciprocating engines, the *Eugene* was making way by 1007, increasing speed to 12 knots within an hour. Conditions in the fire rooms were not so bad then — they were cooled by steam-driven blowers. The electrical blowers in the engine room, of course, remained inoperable. The frigate worked up to 16 knots that night.

The steering mechanism had not been affected by the fire, so steering by magnetic compass was the major difference for those in the wheelhouse. The kerosene binnacle light could not be made to burn, however. After dark, a seaman had to illuminate the compass card with a carefully screened flashlight. The rudder angle indicator no longer functioned, which did not matter because the helmsman could not see it.

The galley, on the mess deck, was also out of commission, so the cooks issued Army C-rations, which a number of us thought appetizing after our usual fare. Some way of heating water for coffee must have been found — we could hardly have done without that!

Lookouts sighted the convoy, which had continued on its way, just after midnight. The *Eugene* resumed her escort station well before

dawn, although without radar or sonar her value there was minimal. The end of 1944 found us tired, dirty, unshaven — and convinced yet again that ours was indeed a lucky ship.

We made Humboldt Bay during the late afternoon of 2 January. Repairs to the damaged electrical equipment began immediately. It was no small undertaking — the main switchboard had burned out — but with assistance from the *Dobbin*, the job was finished in three days. Meanwhile, others turned to restoring the ship to a more habitable, although hardly pristine, condition. And in preparation for return to the States, unauthorized armament and fittings were removed.

By the afternoon of 5 January, the *Eugene* was ready for sea, although some doubt remained as to whether the ship girder had been weakened appreciably by the intense heat. Only rough seas could determine this. Hawsers were run fore and aft, connecting to a lever amidships. It lay on the deck with a seaman detailed to keep watch. Should the lever begin to rise, it would be time to abandon ship, a prospect less alarming because the *El Paso* would be in company.

The two frigates bade farewell to the Seventh Fleet at daybreak on 6 January, paused at See-adler Harbor the next day, and on 8 January began the long passage to Bora Bora in the Society Islands. It required eleven days, which passed without incident.

During this time, however, relations between the ship's officers and Commodore Steinmetz must have reached their nadir. When the two ships moored in Bora Bora's Teavanui Harbor, the commander of a much diminished Escort Division 29 and his staff transferred to the *El Paso*. Our sympathies, perhaps unfairly, were entirely with our officers. Captain MacLean had never been popular, but several of his subordinates, including Mr. Hilliard and Mr. Bullard, both of whom had clashed with the commodore, were liked and respected.

Bora Bora was one of the most beautiful islands we had seen, and its bananas, coconuts, papayas, and other fruits were beyond compare. However, we were homeward bound, so there

were few regrets when the refueled frigates sailed on 21 January.

The passage to Panama differed from that from Hollandia only in that the *Eugene* now had to keep station on the *El Paso*. We agreed that it was worth this minor inconvenience to be a private ship again. Despite a rumor that we might have to put in at the Galapagos Islands for fuel, we reached Panama on 5 February. The *Eugene* stood directly into the canal while her sister paused at Balboa for repairs.

Passing quickly through the Miraflores and Pedro Miguel locks, the frigate steamed through Gaillard Cut and across Gatun Lake in gathering darkness, traversed Gatun Lock and moored at the Cristobal Naval Operating Base. Both watches enjoyed six-hour liberties in Colon the next day. More important, the *Eugene* received her first mail since departing Hollandia. This included most of our Christmas presents — and the Philippine chart portfolio!

Soon after noon on 7 February, the frigate stood out of Cristobal escorting two transports bound for Guantanamo Bay. We turned the convoy over to a submarine chaser off the western end of Cuba on 10 February. The *El Paso* overtook the *Eugene* in the Strait of Florida the next day. We had a good view of Miami from seaward, but then the weather closed in, so the navigators had to rely on dead reckoning from that point on to New York. Mr. Hilliard was gifted with the true navigator's sixth sense — we picked up the sea buoy off Ambrose Channel three days later, just five minutes before his estimated time of arrival.

It was hardly a pleasant passage. The temperature fell steadily, and the *Eugene's* unused heating system refused to function. Blankets and all the clothing we could don made little difference. When the sea got up off Hatteras, the unfamiliar motion caused further discomfort for many. Snow on the ground when the frigates moored at the Leonardo ammunition pier on 14 February made the 10° temperature seem even colder, but the exertion of off loading the ship's ammunition warmed us considerably.

We spent that night in Gravesend Bay, where



The *José Martí* (ex-*Eugene*) standing into Havana harbor after her transfer to the Cuban Navy.

the fuel was pumped out. With a pilot on board, the *Eugene* headed for Brooklyn early the next morning. The pilot took her up at a rapid pace in order to make the navy yard at slack water. In The Narrows, the steering engine jammed, fortunately with the rudder amidships. Breaking the yellow and blue five flag at the truck to indicate that she was not under control, the frigate traversed one of the busiest waterways in the world with speed undiminished. The pilot later said that it was the first time he had seen a Staten Island ferry give way to another vessel.

Her steering engine functioning again, the *Eugene* entered the Brooklyn Navy Yard and moored outboard of the *El Paso* at Pier 10. Yard workmen swarmed on board, while the question uppermost in our minds was when liberty would be granted. Captain MacLean saw no hurry about this — the normal two-section liberty began at 1700 and ended at 0800 the next morning. We thought that this was unreasonable — there was little that we could do on board under the cir-

cumstances. Mr. Hilliard agreed. While the captain was spending several days with his family, liberty began at 1300 and ended at 1100, only to revert to the less generous hours when he returned.

Liberty was important, but leave was more so. I hoped for at least twenty days so that I could visit my family in Oregon. Since I had decided that destroyer-escort duty would be preferable to that in a frigate probably destined for weather patrol, I had to await a transfer. Late in March, by chance on the day that Mr. Hilliard relieved Captain MacLean as the *Eugene's* commanding officer, I bade ship and shipmates farewell and departed for the Ellis Island Receiving Station with twenty days delayed orders.

As my flight from Oregon entered a holding pattern over La Guardia Field on 13 April 1945, the *Eugene* and the *El Paso* were standing out of New York with a convoy bound for the Mediterranean. I stayed at Ellis Island until 30 April, when I reported on board the *Pettit* (DE 253),

which helped to escort the last convoy to France, after VE-day, and then went to the Pacific. Meanwhile, the two frigates returned from the Mediterranean with a convoy and were converted to weather ships, the *Eugene* remaining in the Atlantic while the *El Paso* returned to the Philippines for weather patrol out of Leyte.

In January 1946, the *Eugene* put in at Boston, where the *Pettit* was preparing for inactivation. I went on board, but to my disappointment, most of my friends had been discharged or transferred and Captain Hilliard was ashore.

The *Eugene* was decommissioned in June, some six weeks after the *Pettit*'s commission pennant had been hauled down, but while the *Pettit*'s active career had ended, the frigate was transferred to the Cuban Navy in 1947. Renamed the *José Martí* in honor of the poet-patriot of an earlier day, she took part in an unsuccessful

attempt to overthrow the government of Fulgencia Batista before becoming a unit of Fidel Castro's navy. She and the *Pettit* were sunk as targets by their respective navies, the *Pettit* in 1974 and the former *Eugene* the following year.



Robert Johnson received the Ph.D. in History from the Claremont Graduate School in 1956 and spent his academic career at The University of Alabama, where he retired as professor and department chairman in 1993. He is the author of five books, of which the last, Bering Sea Escort (1992), describes his service in the Coast Guard cutter Haida. This article is a sequel.



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Lord Sandwich, Lord Orford, and Whittlesey Mere, 1774

H. J. K. JENKINS

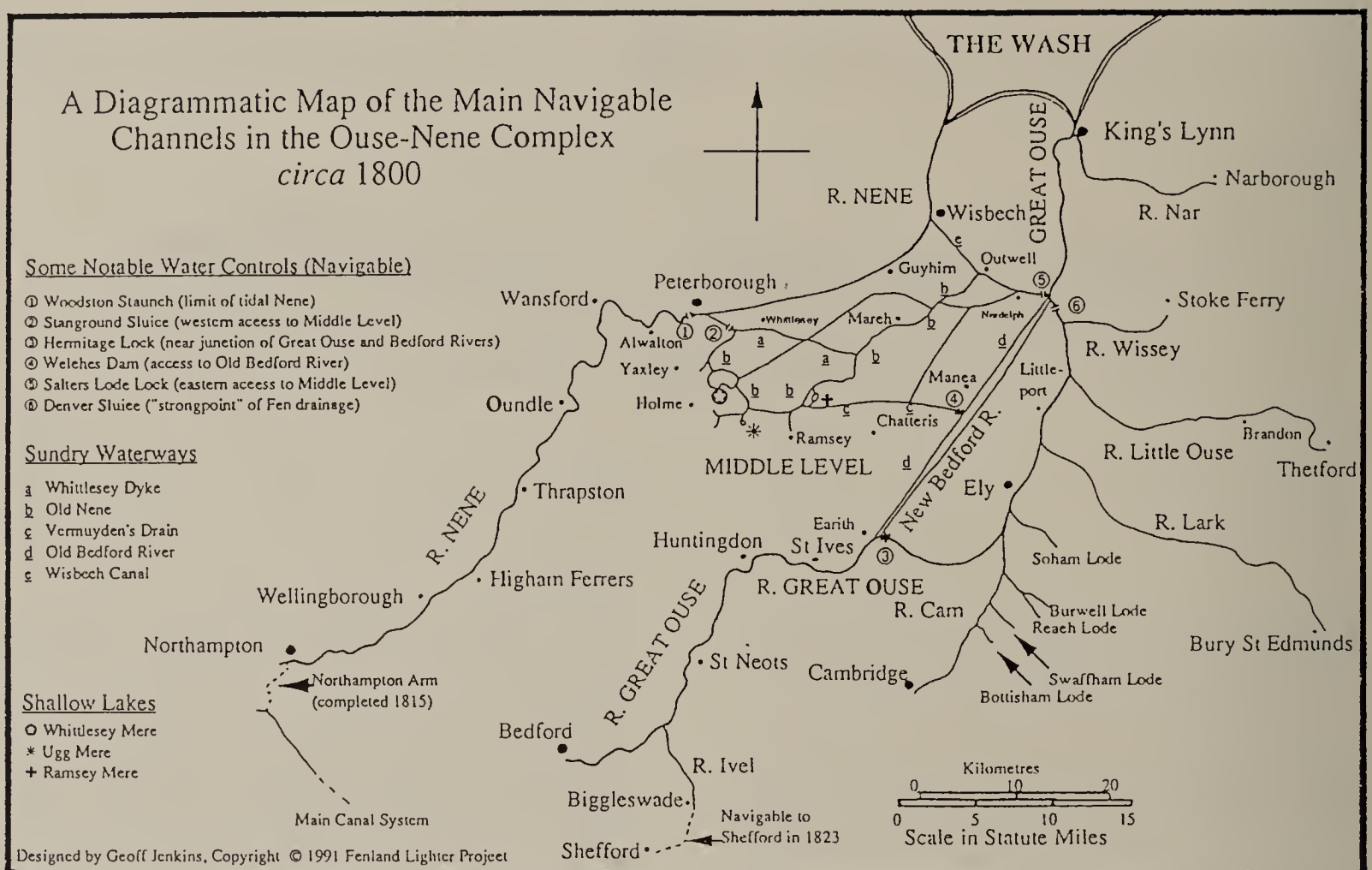
John Montagu, fourth Earl of Sandwich, was a major figure on the British political scene during much of the eighteenth century. In particular, his role as First Lord of the Admiralty in the period of the American War of Independence has attracted much attention. His private residence was at Hinchbrooke, close to the town of Huntingdon, on the margins of the eastern region of England known as the Fens. From Hinchbrooke, he often visited the now-vanished lake of Whittlesey Mere, a little southward of Peterborough, for the purposes of yachting.¹ During high summer of 1774, Sandwich made a rendezvous with his longstanding acquaintance, Lord Orford, upon the Mere's waters. The circumstances of this episode are well documented and, perhaps surprisingly at first sight, the matter throws useful light upon the region's distinctive barge traffic, a phenomenon which had close links with the extended coasting trade of the period. Within a different perspective, this same episode might well be viewed as a wry footnote to the broader affairs of the Atlantic community at the very time when the storm clouds of Anglo-American confrontation were darkening.

Whittlesey Mere was an extensive though very shallow lake, providing a celebrated beauty spot. The Mere was really a leftover from an earlier epoch, when the Fenland region was largely composed of treacherous marshes and unpredictable bodies of water. Systematic drainage in the seventeenth century had produced a transformation to rich farmland and, in the mid-

1800s, Whittlesey Mere itself would be eventually pumped dry (an act nowadays viewed as Victorian vandalism). In the late eighteenth century, however, the Mere's waters were still very much a reality. Lord Sandwich's sailing activities on the lake involved an installation known locally as "Port Sandwich," including a yacht house and wharf. His current yacht, in the summer of 1774, was actually named *Whittlesey* as a compliment to the location. This pleasure craft appears to have followed orthodox principles for such vessels.

Lord Orford's party made its appearance on the Mere in hulls of a very different sort. These were of the Fenland lighter type — coupled together in characteristic fashion by an ingenious arrangement of chains, poles, and ropes — thus forming what was termed a "gang," a barge-train which could be steered without any need for rudders. Gangs of Fenland lighters long formed the dominant freighter type on the Ouse-Nene complex of waterways, reaching far inland from the large bay called the Wash.² Over a very considerable period, the transshipment of goods between seagoing vessels and Fenland lighters was a notable feature of the region's trade.³

In Lord Orford's gang, various modifications had been made so that the line of five hulls served, in effect, as an articulated yacht.⁴ Typical hull length would have been about thirteen meters, and substantial cabins had been added in



some cases. The "forelighter," the leading vessel, carried primitive sailing rig which was typical for such craft, and it also contained specially fitted cooking facilities, as well as berths for a pair of women servants. The other lighters were unrigged and two of them provided Orford's own quarters, accommodations for various guests, and a saloon capable of seating a dozen diners. The final pair of vessels in the line provided accommodation for crewmen and menservants, as well as a towing horse which could be landed whenever its services became necessary due to a lack of favorable winds and currents.

Three detailed journals have survived from Lord Orford's Fenland cruise of 1774. These were written by Orford himself, a young artist called George Farrington, and another guest by the name of Thomas Roberts. Together, these journals provide a colorful, informative, and sometimes humorous account of the pleasure cruise from the east part of the Fenlands across to Peterborough. The route involved part of the River Great Ouse, including tidal waters, then

westward progress via Salters Lode Lock, through the web of waterways known as the Middle Level. The journal keepers paid particular attention to Whittlesey Mere, and to the rendezvous with Lord Sandwich and various naval officers who were his guests.⁵

George Walpole, third Earl of Orford, was an eccentric aristocrat of dubious reputation. Nevertheless, he served for many years as a very popular Lord Lieutenant in the county of Norfolk, and his nature combined a taste for innovation and a love of the outdoor life. His use of modified freight craft for pleasure cruising was entirely within his character. Both the vessels and the waterways which he used were, in essence, illustrative of the region's heavy transport system at the time, and the journals kept during the jaunt provide evidence of unusual interest. Written by intelligent travelers to whom the Fenland waterways were something of a novelty, the journal accounts contain colorful impressions of a sort which never found their way into commercial records.

In his entry for 17 July, Orford included an



An impression of Lord Orford's main vessels. Drawing by H. J. K. Jenkins.

amusing description illustrating the longstanding antagonism between the landowning and water transport interests. This centered upon the efforts of a Fenland proprietor who attempted to charge an unjustified mooring fee, but who "could give...no good reason for this novel demand." Orford's comments for 27 July noted the marked contrast between "exceedingly rich" farmland and "ragged inhabitants." Elsewhere, some striking pictures of the route's varying nature emerged, as in Farrington's entry of 2 August describing one reach which involved "a very narrow channel enclosed with remarkably high reeds."

Many details regarding Orford's vessels remain obscure, but it seems most unlikely that he hired a gang of lighters for a limited period, during which they underwent a temporary conversion of a rough-and-ready (although perhaps gaudy) nature. This idea is supported to some extent by Roberts' complaint on 21 July regarding a heavy rain shower, "which made its way into the Cabins, and wetted the Bedding very much." Still, the accommodation was good enough to allow Sandwich being invited to dinner on 26 July out on Whittlesey Mere, and Roberts duly recorded the First Lord's arrival on board "with his Officers and Attendants."

Notable among Sandwich's naval officers was Captain William Hotham. A couple of years

later, he was to receive command of HMS *Preston*, and to serve in her on the North American Station. During 1777, as the Royal Navy's senior officer present in the New York area, he was cooperating with General Sir Henry Clinton in operations on the Hudson River when, "the fatal news arrived of Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga."⁵ Another noteworthy officer in Sandwich's party was Captain Sir Richard Bickerton (curiously, two of the journals mangled his name somewhat; only Farrington rendered it correctly).⁶ In the preceding year, Bickerton had been selected to steer the Royal barge at a naval review, and had received a knighthood. At the time of the Fenland jaunt, he was captain of the ship-rigged Admiralty yacht *Princess Augusta*, a vessel which also on occasion catered to Sandwich's taste for diversion afloat.⁷ Favored by the First Lord, Bickerton was to receive command of HMS *Terrible* later in the 1770s. On board that ship-of-the-line, he was present at the Battle of Ushant in 1778, an engagement reflecting French involvement in the widening ambit of the American conflict. During their careers, both Hotham and Bickerton were to achieve flag rank.

During the Fenland excursion, Orford's gang of lighters had been moored with anchors from each end of the line. This proved inconvenient, but the problem was solved by naval know-how. Farrington recorded in his journal on 26 July:

Sir Richard Bickerton advised to take up the anchor at one end of the Fleet, and suffer it to go with the wind, which, by preventing any opposition, would cause the rolling to cease with which we had been troubled the preceding night.

It seems surprising that the lightermen employed by Orford had not thought of this simple measure, since the broad waters of the Mere provided more than ample space for the entire line to swing in any direction.

In addition to his lighters, Lord Orford brought a number of small boats which were used for fishing, impromptu sailing races, and so forth. Some of these small craft were named after ships which figured in the *Aeneid*, and on occasion they were matched against Sandwich's *Whittlesey* and other local yachts. Lord Orford's

journal entry for 25 July stated that the *Whittlesey* had "outstripped us all" on that day. He added criticism of his own boat, the *Chimera*, blaming her poor performance to windward on the fact that she was built "high out of the water, and shaped like the shell of a walnut."

There is a striking contrast between the image of such peaceful water sport on Whittlesey Mere and the situation which was developing on the other side of the Atlantic. Already, even as Sandwich helmed his sleek yacht, the Boston Port Act was taking effect, with British warships attempting to impose a type of blockade against trade viewed as underpinning American antagonism. War clouds were indeed darkening and, so far as Sandwich and his yachting associates were concerned, it is tempting to view the Fenland activities considered here as forming the proverbial "lull before the storm."

Notes

1. For general comment, see H. J. K. Jenkins, "Lord Sandwich and Early Fenland Yachting," *Mariner's Mirror* 78 (1992), 485-486.
2. Formed in 1986, the Fenland Lighter Project, based at the Educational Development Centre, Peterborough PE3 6TP (UK) actively fosters interest in historical links between such river traffic and seagoing commerce.
3. H. J. K. Jenkins, "Fenland Lighters and Their Heyday, c. 1770-1850," *Mariner's Mirror* 79 (1985), 155-169.
4. H. J. K. Jenkins, "Fenland Lighters as 'Yachts', c. 1774," *Mariner's Mirror* 71 (1985), 348.
5. The original manuscripts are now in the Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington, Connecticut. In mid-Victorian times, a printed version of all three journals, edited by J. W. Childers, made its appearance under

the title *Lord Orford's Voyage round the Fens in 1774*. Other editions of this text have since been produced by Cambridgeshire Libraries Publications, the most recent being in 1993, with the introduction by myself, notes by Mary Liquorice on various Latin quotations included in the journals, and the historical map by Geoff Jenkins.

6. Professor J. K. Laughton's *Dictionary of National Biography*, article on Hotham, Volume 27 (1891), 411-413 remains of interest.
7. A published query by myself, regarding aspects of this matter, appeared in *Mariner's Mirror* 72 (1986), 91, but has produced little to date. The *Princess Augusta* was often referred to by her earlier name, plain *Augusta*.





The USS *Constitution*: A Design Confirmed

TYRONE G. MARTIN

The immediate cause of the formation of the US Navy was the outburst of Algerine piratical activity in the fall of 1793. When news of the capture of eleven American merchantmen was made public in Philadelphia on 8 December, reaction was swift. Before the month was out, President George Washington recommended to Congress that a naval defense be created. A congressional committee began meetings immediately after the New Year.¹

There resided in Philadelphia at this time a forty-one-year-old shipbuilder named Joshua Humphreys, who had apprenticed in that business prior to the Revolution and had been a partner in a shipyard with John Wharton, whose cousin Thomas had been governor of the commonwealth during the conflict. He was an experienced shipbuilder, in a position to know what was occurring within the halls of government, and well known to many of its inhabitants. In a letter to Senator Robert Morris on 6 January 1794 (which he misdated 1793), Humphreys wrote that, since the nation could afford only a few warships, he thought that those built should be of a strength to overmatch any adversary of the same type and maneuverability, as to avoid action with a superior force. He proposed massive frigates 150 feet long on keel and capable of carrying twenty-eight or thirty 24-pounder long guns of the line. While these would be expensive, they would be less so in operation because to build a number of conventional frigates soon to be overwhelmed by almost any European foe was a wasteful exercise.²

This letter was not Humphreys' first on the subject. On 16 December 1793, he wrote to Secretary Henry Knox and referred to a previously submitted construction estimate, perhaps as early as 1791, when the Secretary is known to have solicited such information.³ Humphreys was not the only shipbuilder to make a submission, for on 4 January Samuel Hodgdon, also of Philadelphia, had submitted a proposal for an 800-ton frigate along the lines of a British 36.⁴

The select committee resulting from a House resolution on 2 January consisted of six Federalists and three Republicans. On 20 January, it presented a recommendation that four 44-gun frigates carrying 18- and 19-pounder guns and two 20-gun ships be constructed for an optimistically small sum of \$600,000. The subsequent debate began on 16 February and split along predictable, North-South, inland-tidewater lines. It waxed hot and heavy for more than a month before an authorization bill was passed, 50-39, on 10 March. The Senate had few problems with it and voted "aye" nine days later. President Washington signed it on 27 March.⁵ It is clear from the final bill's specification of four 44-gun and two 36-gun frigates that Congress was moving toward more of a navy than the committee thought wise to recommend.

With the legislative decision taken, Secretary Knox began to move forward with the program. He wrote to John Hackett of Salisbury, Massa-

chusetts, requesting him to come to Philadelphia at government expense to consult "upon the best properties to be adopted as a general plan for the vessells now to be built."⁶ Hackett had built the frigate *Alliance* during the Revolution, as well as the ship-of-the-line *America*.

During this period, Knox sought out a number of men to determine their views on the subject. Among this group were Joshua Humphreys, John Wharton, Thomas Penrose, John Powers, Samuel Bowen, and "Col. Marsh," all termed by him either "eminent" or "excellent" shipbuilders. Humphreys, Wharton, and Marsh endorsed Humphreys' plan for the 44s. Penrose, Powers, and Bowen thought the main deck battery ought to be limited to twenty-eight 24-pounders to prevent a "broken back." As for the 36s, Penrose thought they should be eleven feet shorter than proposed by Humphreys, and not carry guns larger than 12-pounders.⁷

On 12 April, Humphreys sent Knox a letter setting forth suggested designs. The Secretary responded, requesting he:

*Prepare the models for the frame of the frigates proposed by you in your letter of this date and that you would please to prepare an accurate draft, and the models of the same, the latter to have the frame accurately described.*⁸

Three days later, Secretary Knox wrote to President Washington to report in some detail the discussions he had concerning the frigates and with whom, including the fact that Hackett had not yet appeared. With regard to the ships' characteristics and armament, he said the consensus was that the 44s should carry thirty 24-pounders on one deck, but be only eight feet long rather than the ten feet common in French models.⁹ Additional armament for the 44s should consist of eight 12-pounders, four 8-inch howitzers, two 5.5-inch howitzers, and smaller weapons for the tops and forecastle.¹⁰ The 44s should be 147 feet on keel with a 43-foot beam, a 14-foot depth of hold, six feet "in the clear" between spar and gun decks, "and seven feet in the waist." It was proposed to "devise certain braces and riders in order to give a just strength" to the

ships.¹¹ The 36s should "carry the same weight of metal of the forty-four gun ships, but only to have twenty-eight guns upon one deck, of course eleven feet shorter." Mr. Penrose thought the 36s ought to be 120' on keel (163 on the gun deck), with a 35-foot beam, 12-foot hold, six feet between decks, and six feet waist, and not carry anything larger than 12-pounders.

Knox went on to recommend that the frigates be built under government supervision at six different ports in order to spread the work and also exert better control over construction. His recommendations were that a 36 would be built in Charleston, South Carolina, a 36 in Norfolk or Portsmouth, Virginia, a 44 in Baltimore, a 44 in Philadelphia, a 44 in New York, and a 44 in Boston. The Secretary had reservations about the capabilities of the "two Southern places," but thought it would be possible "if some additional artificers should be sent from the northward, particularly to Charleston."¹²

President Washington responded on 16 April, allowing Knox to proceed as soon as the designs were firm and monies available. He amended Knox's allocation of ships by exchanging Baltimore and Norfolk, allowing one of the 44s to be built in the South, specifically to satisfy egos in rich and populous Virginia.¹³

On 21 April, Knox forwarded a copy of a materials estimate provided by Humphreys to Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, together with information that the President had decided the ships would be built in different ports, as he proposed.¹⁴ Knox was urging Hamilton, who was then the government's principal contracting authority, to be ready to let contracts as soon as Congress appropriated the funds. His main concern was getting timber cutting operations going as soon as possible.¹⁵

Also in Philadelphia at this time was a man ten years Humphreys' junior named Josiah Fox. Fox, a Quaker like Humphreys, had only arrived in the United States in late October 1793 from England. He had had several years' experience as an apprentice shipwright in private yards and had made a number of trading voyages. With the eruption of

the French Revolution and the consequent disruption of trade, he decided to make a life for himself in America. The presence of distant relatives in Philadelphia, including Andrew Ellicott, then Surveyor General of the United States, led him to that city.¹⁶

Given his access to America's governing society, it is not surprising that the enterprising Fox was drawn into the process of creating the frigates. At some point, probably in mid- to late April, Joshua Humphreys invited him to give his "opinion in Writing on his Model & also wished to Know my Sentiments on the proposed Dimensions of the 44 Gun Frigates..." Fox responded that he did not believe Humphreys' design would achieve its goals. The wales, he wrote, were sited too low and the fore and after parts of the hull were too sharp in proportion to the midship body. All hollow lines ought to be avoided. The ship was too long for its beam and, because of the sharpness, might even break her back upon launching. She ought to have more rake aft. Finally, the midship bend, *i.e.*, the maximum beam of the ship, ought to be "placed as far forward as Can be conveniently done but not so far as to occasion the fore Body to contain many cubical feet more than the after Body..."¹⁷

Fox had nothing to say about the innovative diagonal riders which Humphreys was proposing as a means to support the great length and weight of his design, and to reduce the onset of hogging.¹⁸ Because he was critical of the design's length and sharpness, his failure to comment on the riders may be an indication that he did not really grasp their importance. Certainly nothing like them had been employed in England, and would not be for nearly another two decades.

Upon receiving Fox's comments from Humphreys, Secretary Knox sent a letter paraphrasing them to John Wharton, Humphreys' old partner, on 12 May, asking him for his views.¹⁹ Whatever Wharton's reply was is not known, and in the absence of any drawings by either Fox or Humphreys prior to this time, it is impossible to know what specific design elements might be attributable to Fox. This exchange came more than a month after Humphreys had been directed to proceed, and in the absence of any correspon-

dence, it does not appear likely that any further significant changes were made.

Because the draft letter in Fox's papers bears no date, precisely when Humphreys made his request and when Fox delivered his comments cannot be established with certainty. However, the fact that the request was made at all is an indication the Briton had not been party to the discussions reported by Knox that led Humphreys being directed to make drafts and models. This thought is reinforced by the date Knox forwarded comments to Wharton for review, a date one month after the directive was issued to Humphreys and weeks after he had delivered at least a materials list to the Secretary. In the absence of any correspondence on the subject in the following weeks, it seems unlikely that Fox's criticisms had any impact. The shorter keel length and narrower beam dimensions from those in Humphreys' January letter are attributable to Knox's direction. It is possible that the still shorter final keel length (two feet) and broader beam (one foot) in the builder's draft resulted from Fox's input, but these could just as well have been the result of further calculations done when the lines were laid down. The sharpness of the hull form, of which he was critical, remained. The two copied builder's drafts in existence are identical, in their essentials, with the undated 44-gun draft titled "Terrible" (meaning awesome) attributed to Humphreys and thought to be the master plan,²⁰ indicating that he completed it after consensus had been reached on the characteristics of the ships. What is clear is that the resultant ships reflected Humphreys' philosophy of large, strong, fast, heavily-armed frigates, clearly more powerful than any of contemporary, conventional design.

Congress got around to appropriating the funds for the building program on 9 June, when \$688,888.32 was provided.²¹ It proved to be only the first appropriation for the ships, for the materials specified — and the problems procuring them — sent costs soaring.

With money available, Hamilton and Knox hastened to get the program activated. On the very day appropriations were made, John T.

Morgan, who had been given to understand he would build the frigate at Norfolk, received a contract to go south and procure the live oak, cedar, and pitch pine.²² Contracts also were let for composition metal, sheathing copper, bolts, nails, bunting, iron kitchens (cambooses), and cannon by the end of the month.²³

On 14 June, Humphreys asked Fox to consider his drafts and advise him about the size of a loft necessary to lay out the moulds (patterns for frame parts).²⁴ Humphreys' request for this advice evidently was based on an awareness that Secretary Knox would be asking about it. Just a week later, Knox wrote to Humphreys:

*The building for the moulds being so essential no time should be lost in putting it in train of instant execution. It ought to be framed so that if no further use should be required for it that it may be sold to the best advantage.*²⁵

Four days later, Knox wrote to Hamilton to report the imminent appointment of naval agents at Boston, New York, and Baltimore, with others to follow. He said he intended to appoint John T. Morgan constructor at Norfolk and Joshua Humphreys at Philadelphia; the remainder had yet to be determined. He also passed on the news that Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was being substituted for Charleston as a building site because of doubts about the latter's capabilities.²⁶ On 28 June, Knox formally appointed Humphreys "the Constructor or Master Builder of a Forty-four Gun Ship, to be built in the port of Philadelphia at the rate of compensation of Two thousand dollars per annum. This compensation is to be considered as commencing on the first of May last, in consideration of your incessant application to the public interest in adjusting the principles of the Ships, drawing the drafts, and making models, &c."²⁷

In this situation, Humphreys needed help. The most available candidate appears to have been Josiah Fox: not otherwise employed, having a modicum of experience, and readily at hand. After casting about for a way to put him on the payroll, Knox appointed him to fill a vacant clerk's position in the War Department on 16

July, "to be appropriated at present to the assistance of Joshua Humphreys who is constructing the models and draughts for the frigates to be built in the United States." His pay, \$500 a year, was made retroactive to 1 July, probably in recognition of the contributions he already had made to the project as an informal consultant.²⁹

On 24 July, Knox wrote to Humphreys requesting that the moulds be prepared as quickly as possible and delivered to the naval agents at the building sites — even though every site did not have an agent. He also notified the constructor of the substitution of Portsmouth for Charleston. By this time, Fox had been tasked to make copies of the 44-gun draft for this purpose. It was Knox's intention that these copies, together with the materials lists and moulds, be completed and forwarded before attending to those of the 36s.³⁰

Humphreys assigned the production of the copies to Fox while he attended to his other responsibilities.³¹ It soon became apparent to him that Fox was not content merely to make copies, but persistently attempted to alter the drafts contrary to the details agreed to by the Secretary of War and his consultants. Unable to get Fox to conform, Humphreys, who was not the draftsman Fox was, took over the responsibility himself and set Fox to work overseeing the completion of the mould loft. When the 44 drafting was finished, he would then get the moulds prepared while Humphreys turned his attention to the drafts and related papers for the 36s.³² Fox's actions further delayed the project, and the drafts and moulds for the 44s were not ready at the end of August.³³

In order to get things moving, Humphreys decided to bring in another assistant. He chose William Doughty, son and apprentice of another Philadelphia shipwright. Just when this occurred is not recorded, but Doughty was reported already working on drafts on 14 October.³⁴ He must have been at it for some time before that, for on 23 October, in order that the government pay for his services, Secretary Knox appointed him clerk of the yard at an annual salary of \$750. Unlike Fox's appointment, which assigned him duties relating to assisting Hum-

phreys, Doughty would be expected to perform the clerk's duties and assist the contractor in the draft preparation process.³⁵ While Doughty primarily made draft copies when not occupied with his clerking duties, Fox was concerned mainly with making the sets of moulds, a task for which he had acknowledged skill.

Progress was being made. On 14 November, Knox reported to Tench Coxe, Commissioner of the Revenue, that the moulds would be forwarded immediately to John Morgan so he could begin cutting live oak timber on the sea islands of Georgia.³⁶ Drafts for the 44s were sent to the naval agents at Boston, New York, and Norfolk on 29 November — one done by Doughty still exists. Doughty apparently made those for Boston and New York. Fox may have made the one for Norfolk.³⁷

The two younger men seem to have hit it off well, and Fox readily passed on his knowledge of drafting and shipbuilding to Doughty. They also shared the difficulties of working for a man who had the strength of his convictions, who had no patience with fools, and who would brook no infringement of his position. For all that, Humphreys was an eminently fair man and subsequently gave each of his subordinates glowing endorsements when they later sought to better themselves.

It became increasingly apparent that the cutting operation in Georgia was going to require John Morgan's presence for a long time to come, and some new arrangement was required if the frigate to be built at Norfolk was to proceed apace. In December, Humphreys wrote to Knox:

*I take the Liberty of recommending Mr. Josiah Fox as a suitable person to carry on The Frigate to be built at Norfolk in the absence of Mr. Morgan and consider his abilities equal to the task.*³⁸

William Doughty completed the drafts for the two 36s in mid-January, shortly after Timothy Pickering succeeded Henry Knox as Secretary of War. One month later, the associated documentation having been compiled and the

mould sets manufactured, the assembled packages were sent to Baltimore and Portsmouth.³⁹

From the existing contemporary record, later familial claims notwithstanding, it appears that Joshua Humphreys indeed deserves credit for the design concept that resulted in the legendary American 44-gun frigates. While some details were changed by consensus of a group of consultants enlisted by Secretary of War Knox, the resultant ships clearly were the embodiment of the philosophy Humphreys had enunciated to Robert Morris at the beginning of 1794. These same papers indicate that William Doughty copied Humphreys' master drafts to produce the builder's drafts that resulted in *Congress*, *Constellation*, *Constitution*, and probably *President*. Presumably, Humphreys used his master drafts as a reference for building *United States* in his own yard. Josiah Fox's contribution to the effort lay primarily in the preparation of superb moulds for the woodcutters and all the building yards. He subsequently would produce the design to which the much-delayed and modified sixth unit of the original authorization, *Chesapeake*, would be built.

Joshua Humphreys also designed a 74-gun ship-of-the-line in response to a 1799 Congressional authorization, but the Jefferson administration canceled the program. Humphreys was let go in November 1801, never to design another warship. He continued in the shipbuilding business until his death in 1837.

Josiah Fox was promoted to Naval Constructor in 1799 to design the reauthorized *Chesapeake*. He also designed the tribute frigate *Crescent* for the Algerines and the subscription frigate *Philadelphia*, as well as several lesser warships. Let go in 1801, he was again appointed in 1804 and served until 1809, designing some of the Jeffersonian gunboats. He attempted, unsuccessfully, to be reappointed in 1826. He died in 1847.

William Doughty, after a brief stint as Naval Constructor in 1804, was reappointed in 1813. The appointment was made permanent in 1816, making him the first career Naval Constructor. He designed a majority of the Navy's liners,

frigates, and sloops-of-war in the postwar era. He resigned in 1837 to become a live oak contractor, and died in 1859.

As for the ships resulting from that original design effort, USS *Chesapeake*, the unit redesigned by Fox, had a career as checkered as her origin. Commissioned in the late spring of 1800, she captured the privateer *La Juene Creole* on the first day of 1801 in the Quasi-War with France. Shortly thereafter, she was placed in ordinary. She served in the Mediterranean under the ineffective leadership of Commodore Richard V. Morris during 1802–1803. Newly reactivated in June 1807, she was fired into by HMS *Leopard* in a deserter-hunting episode that did honors to neither ship's leaders. War was narrowly averted.⁴² With the start of the War of 1812, *Chesapeake* cruised the central Atlantic capturing five British merchantmen. On her next sortie, on 1 June 1813, she was beaten and captured by HMS *Shannon* in a fifteen-minute engagement off Boston Light. Her captain, James Lawrence, died after urging his men: "Don't give up the ship" — an already futile order.⁴³ She was retained in the Royal Navy until 1820.

The Portsmouth, New Hampshire, unit, *Congress*, was commissioned six months earlier than *Chesapeake*, and saw service in the Quasi-War with France until its end in 1801. She was on duty in the Mediterranean from 1804 to 1806. After extensive repairs, she made three cruises during the War of 1812, capturing more than a dozen enemy merchant ships, but fought no actions. *Congress* was assigned to the West Indies Squadron for piracy suppression during 1822–1823. Returning to ordinary, she was used for several years as a receiving ship at Norfolk prior to breaking her up in 1834.⁴⁴

USS *President*, the third of the delayed units, entered service in 1800, as the Quasi-War was winding down. She served as the flagship of the first Mediterranean Squadron, 1801–1802, and returned to that theater in 1805 as peace was achieved with Tripoli. Reactivated in 1809, she cruised the East Coast until war broke out in June 1812, and on one occasion, mistakenly fired

into HMS *Lille Belt* (often misidentified as *Little Belt*) in an incident seen as retaliation for the *Chesapeake-Shannon* incident. Her first three war cruises, under Commodore John Rodgers, produced some captures of enemy merchantmen, as well as a war schooner, but no dramatic actions.⁴⁵ In January 1815, then commanded by Captain Stephen Decatur, she first ran aground while leaving New York, then was chased and captured by a four-ship British squadron. Taken to England, her lines were copied and the ship broken up. Hers was the shortest career of the original six.

Constellation, the 36-cum-38-gunner built at Baltimore, was completed without Humphreys' diagonal riders at the insistence of both constructor David Stodder and her first captain, Thomas Truxtun. Why they took that position is unknown. In any event, the ship entered service in 1798, and in 1799 and 1800 gained the first two frigate victories of the young US Navy, defeating the French *L'Insurgente* and *Vengeance*, respectively.⁴⁶ She saw service in the Barbary War (1802–1805) and then was in ordinary until 1812. Requiring an extensive rebuild at that time, a British blockade was in place by the time it was completed, and the ship saw no action. In the postwar years, she served twice in the Mediterranean Squadron, as well as in the South Atlantic, Pacific, West Indies, and East Indies Squadrons. Laid up in 1845, she was broken up in 1853. Some of her timbers were used in the construction of a second *Constellation* of different design. The latter ship is in Baltimore today.

USS *United States*, 44, was the first of the initial group of ships launched on 10 May 1797. She acted as Commodore John Barry's flagship in the Quasi-War and saw service in the Barbary War. Under the command of Captain Stephen Decatur at the outbreak of the War of 1812, she scored the second American frigate victory of the conflict on 25 October 1812, defeating HMS *Macedonian*.⁴⁷ A British blockade subsequently held her in London, Connecticut, for the war's duration. She returned to the Mediterranean after the war for four years, then, between rather long

periods in ordinary, served in the Pacific, Mediterranean (twice), Home, and African Squadrons. In ordinary at Norfolk at the outbreak of the Civil War, she was captured by the Confederates when that navy yard was abandoned and taken into their service as CSS *United States*. She was retaken a year later when Union forces returned to Norfolk, and again commissioned in the United States Navy. Inactive throughout the war, she was damaged by fire and broken up in 1865.

Then there is the *Constitution*. Launched on the third try in October 1797, she served without distinction in the Quasi-War. Recommissioned again in 1803 under Commodore Edward Preble, she gained a measure of notice leading his squadron in a series of attacks against the Barbary pirate stronghold at Tripoli, actions that led to a peace treaty some months later and for which Preble was awarded a congressional gold medal. In the War of 1812, she electrified the nation with the news of the first ever American frigate victory over a Briton, HMS *Guerriere* on 19 August 1812. From this time onward, she was known popularly as “Old Ironsides.” A little over four months later, she repeated the feat, taking HMS *Java* off Brazil. On her fourth war cruise, she took HMS *Cyane* and HMS *Levant* in a single action. Each of her wartime captains, Isaac Hull, William Bainbridge, and Charles Stewart, was awarded a gold medal. No other ship in the Navy has achieved

such recognition. The ship continued to serve in frontline assignments until 1855, completing a circumnavigation in 1844–1846, and subsequently was used as a training ship for midshipmen and later apprentices until 1881.

Following fifteen years as a receiving ship and a long period of neglect, during 1927–1931 the public was aroused to cause her to be restored and placed on public display, an action first recommended in May 1815. Following a towed trip around the country (1931–1934), she has since remained in Boston. Since 1975, she has been under a long-term program gradually to restore her to her War of 1812 configuration, and has had a small, full time crew of artisans assigned for that purpose. Following an extensive docking and restoration in 1992–1995, in which Joshua Humphreys’ critically important diagonal riders were returned after an absence of more than 120 years, she thrilled the nation and the world in 1997 by briefly sailing independently for the first time since 1881.⁴⁸



Commander Tyrone Martin, 58th Captain of the *Constitution*, is the author of *A Most Fortunate Ship, Undeclared, Creating a Legend*, numerous articles in professional and historical journals, and the column “Salty Talk,” which appears regularly in *Naval History* magazine.

Notes

1. Dudley W. Knox, ed., *Naval Documents Related to the United States Wars with the Barbary Powers: Naval Operations, Including Diplomatic Background from 1785 through 1801*, 6 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office (hereafter GPO), 1939–1944), 1:69–70; Marshall Smelser, *The Congress Founds the Navy, 1787–1798* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1959), 23, 51–52, 58.
2. Humphreys to Morris, 6 January 1793 (misdated: actual year 1794), Joshua Humphreys Letterbook, 1793–1797, vol. 1, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (hereafter HSP).
3. Joshua Humphreys to Henry Knox, 16 December 1793, US Naval Academy Museum; Tyrone G. Martin, *A Most Fortunate Ship*, revised ms, 7, in the author’s possession.
4. Samuel Hodgdon to Knox, 4 January 1794, RG45, (M739, Roll 1), National Archives (hereafter DNA).
5. Act of 27 March 1794, ch. 12, 1 Stat., 350; Martin, *Fortunate Ship*, 8–11.
6. Knox to Hackett, 1 April 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
7. Knox to President George Washington, 15 April 1794, George Washington Papers, Library of Congress.

- (hereafter DLC).
8. Knox to Humphreys, 12 April 1794, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library (hereafter FDRL); RG45 (M625, Roll 74), DNA.
 9. This is the origin of the unsuccessful 8-footers originally produced by Cecil Iron Work and Furnace Hope in response to their 1794 contracts, and supplanted by 9'8" models beginning in 1807.
 10. The plan evidently was to place four of these on each of the 44s and two on each of the 36s, for contracts for ten each were let with Paul Revere in Boston and James Byers in Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1795. Because the *Constitution* was built with quarterdeck bulwarks rather than the open rails of the plan, her howitzers could not be mounted. After a period of use as ballast in the ship, they were landed and placed in Fort Independence in Boston Harbor. Whether or not any of the others saw actual service is not known. *Constellation* does not appear to have carried them, and *United States* was armed initially with larger guns loaned by the State of New York.
 11. This evidently refers to the concept of diagonal riders, the then-revolutionary idea proposed by Joshua Humphreys that made the long, heavy hulls of his design possible.
 12. Knox to Washington, 15 April 1794, George Washington Papers, DLC.
 13. Smelser, *Congress Founds the Navy*, 73.
 14. Knox to Alexander Hamilton, 21 April 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
 15. Knox to Washington, 15 April 1794, George Washington Papers, DLC.
 16. Martin, *Fortunate Ship*, 22.
 17. Undated draft, Josiah Fox Papers, Box 4, Folder 4, Peabody Essex Museum (hereafter PEM).
 18. Tyrone G. Martin and John C. Roach, "Joshua Humphreys' Real Innovation," *Naval History*, April 1994, 32–37.
 19. Knox to John Wharton, 12 May 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
 20. Joshua Humphreys to Samuel Humphreys, 24 August 1827, Joshua Humphreys Papers, HSP.
 21. Howard I. Chapelle, *The History of the American Sailing Navy* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1949), 124–126, Plate VI.
 22. Act of 9 June 1794
 23. Virginia Steele Wood, *Live Oaking: Southern Timber for Tall Ships* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1981), 25.
 24. Martin, *Fortunate Ship*, 11–13.
 25. Humphreys to Josiah Fox, 14 June 1794, Josiah Fox Papers, Letterbook III, PEM.
 26. Knox to Humphreys, 21 June 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
 27. Knox to Hamilton, 25 June 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
 28. Knox to Humphreys, 28 June 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
 29. Knox to Hamilton, 21 April 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
 30. Knox to Fox, 16 July 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
 31. Knox to Humphreys, 24 July 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
 32. Humphreys to Fox, 14 October 1794, Humphreys Letterbook, Vol.1, HSP. Specifically, Humphreys wrote: *The time is now fast advancing and the droughts will be wanting before they can be completed, without the greatest attention paid by you to that business, I have to request that you will give your attention to it both early and late untill the business is completed.*
 33. Humphreys to Secretary of War Timothy Pickering, n.d., possibly early June 1795, Joshua Humphreys Papers, FDRL. The letter in question is filed between two letters dated 5 June 1795.
 34. Knox to Henry Jackson, Naval Agent, Boston, 28 August 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
 35. Humphreys to Fox, 14 October 1794, Box 1, Folder 4, Josiah Fox Papers, PEM.
 36. Knox to William Doughty, 23 October and 14 December 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
 37. Knox to Tench Coxe, 14 November 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
 38. Knox to naval agents at Boston, New York, and Norfolk, 29 November 1794, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA; draft of a 44-gun frigate labeled "William Doughty" and "1794," BuC&R Plan 38–4–2A, RG19, DNA; Josiah Fox to Secretary of the Navy Benjamin Stoddert, 18 February 1799, Fox Papers, PEM; Fox to Secretary of the Navy Samuel Southard, 24 September 1826, Fox Papers, PEM.
 39. Humphreys to Knox, 18 December 1794, C. E. French Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society. It seems the intention was to provide a supervisor until such time as Morgan could take his promised position. Fox was appointed "assistant naval constructor" in May 1795 at a salary of \$900 a year, and continued in that capacity until construction was canceled in 1796.
 40. "Shear" plan labeled "Congress & Frigate Constellation of 36 Guns," signed "William Doughty fecit January 15, 1795," US Naval Academy Museum; Secretary of War Timothy Pickering to naval agents at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Baltimore, 18 February 1795, RG45 (M739, Roll 1), DNA.
 41. In 1827, Fox reportedly stated that he had drawn the plans for *United States*, *Constitution*, and *Constellation*, and that Doughty had done *President* and *Congress* (*National Journal* 11 August 1827). Twenty-eight years earlier, he had claimed credit for all six, Fox to Secretary of the Navy Benjamin Stoddert, 18 February 1799, Josiah Fox Papers, Letterbook II, PEM. In the twentieth century, his descendants continue to echo his claims; see, for example, great-granddaughter Elizabeth Brandon Stanton, "Builder of the First American Navy," *Journal of American History* 2:1 (1908), 101–112.
 42. Spencer C. Tucker and Frank T. Reuter, *Injured Honor*

- (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1996).
43. Alfred T. Mahan, *Sea Power in its Relations to the War of 1812*, 2 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1905), 2:126-148.
 44. Navy Department, *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, 9 vols. (Washington: GPO, 1959-1991), 2:163.
 45. Charles Oscar Paullin, *Commodore John Rodgers, 1773-1838* (Annapolis: US Naval Institute, 1967), 209-277.
 46. Michael Palmer, *Stoddert's War* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987), 98-103, 183-189; Eugene S. Ferguson, *Truxtun of the Constellation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956), 160-177, 187-197.
 47. Mahan, *Sea Power*, 2:397-343
 48. Tyrone G. Martin, *A Most Fortunate Ship*, rev. ed. (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997).



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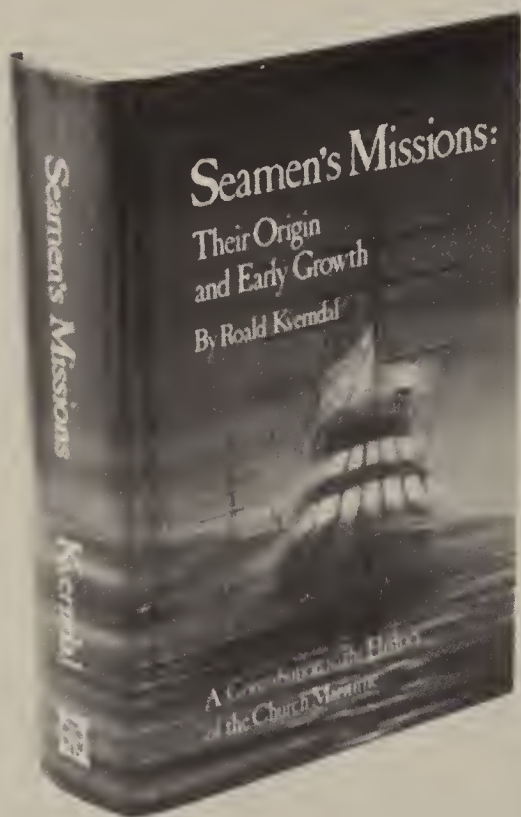


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Notes and Notices

National Maritime Heritage Grants Program

On 2 November 1994, the National Maritime Heritage Act (HR 3059) became Public Law 103-451 (16 USC 5401). It defines a National Maritime Heritage Policy and establishes the National Maritime Heritage Grants Program within the Department of the Interior. The act states that maritime activities of the United States represent a significant part of our nation's history and culture, and the nation should preserve historic maritime resources and promote greater public understanding and appreciation for this heritage.

The act calls on the federal government to determine a National Maritime Heritage Policy. Acting in partnership with public and private nonprofit organizations, the federal government will foster conditions under which historic maritime resources can continue to exist as a significant part of modern society and culture. The partnership should provide leadership in maritime preservation and will assist private organizations as well as state and local governments in expanding their maritime heritage programs and activities.

Through the National Maritime Heritage Grants Program, the federal government will help state and local governments and private nonprofit organizations to carry out their maritime heritage activities. The Grants Program provides funding for education, preservation, and interim projects designed to preserve historic maritime resources and increase public awareness and appreciation for the maritime heritage of the United States.

The Grants Program is administered by the National Maritime Initiative of the National

Parks Service, in partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs). Education Project grants are administered as subgrants through the Trust. Preservation Project grants are administered as direct grants or as subgrants through the National Maritime Initiative and SHPOs. In addition, the Initiative, the Trust, or SHPOs may enter into cooperative agreements with any private nonprofit organization to provide assistance in administering the Grants Program.

The Grants Program is funded through a percentage of the proceeds from the sale or scrapping of obsolete vessels of the National Defense Reserve Fleet (NDRF) that are credited to the Vessel Operations Revolving Fund (VORF) each fiscal year. Of the total amount credited to the VORF each year after 1 July 1994 and before 30 September 1999, fifty percent is available for use by the Maritime Administration for NDRF maintenance, and twenty-five percent is available for use by the Maritime Administration for support of US maritime academies. The remaining twenty-five percent is available for the National Maritime Heritage Grants Program.

The National Maritime Heritage Grants Program supports a very informative and useable website describing many aspects of the program and the application process. The site offers information on who may apply for grants and how these applications should be completed. It provides specific information on what is funded, and the source of the funding. The site also offers a full text copy of HR 3059,

the "National Maritime Heritage Act of 1994," although it is not considered an official version of the bill. After President Clinton signed the bill, it became Public Law 103-451.

The National Maritime Initiative offers resources on maritime related projects and programs throughout the country, along with links to web pages of other participants within the National Park Service that make up the National Maritime Initiative. The Park Service's complex of sites, "Links to the Past," is another valuable electronic resource. World Wide Web addresses, also called URLs (Uniform Resource Locators) for the sites are listed below:

National Park Service's "Links to the Past" Web Site: www.cr.nps.gov

National Park Service National Maritime Initiative Home Page: www.cr.nps.gov/history/maritime

National Maritime Heritage Grants Program: www.cr.nps.gov/history/maritime/1st_tier.htm

National Maritime Heritage Act of 1994 text: www.cr.nps.gov/history/maritime/hr3059.htm



Dr. Timothy Runyan, Past Editor of The American Neptune, is Treasurer of the National Maritime Alliance Board of Directors.

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Announcement

The United States Chesapeake Flotilla

Eight months after President James Madison opened hostilities in America's "Second War of Independence" with Great Britain, known to history as the War of 1812, a fleet of Royal Navy warships entered the Chesapeake Bay and commenced an unprecedented campaign of looting and burning against Maryland-Virginia tidewaters. The United States Navy, blockaded in the Patapsco and Elizabeth Rivers, was unable to provide protection for the beleaguered farms and villages of the region. On 4 July 1813, Captain Joshua Barney, a Revolutionary War naval hero and commander of the famed Baltimore privateer *Rossie*, submitted a plan to the Navy Department calling for the construction of a flying squadron of light-draft gunboats and barges armed with heavy long guns or carronades. He envisioned a fast force capable of shadowing, pursuing, and engaging British landing parties in the shoal waters of the Tidewater, out of the range of the heavy guns of the British frigates and ships-of-the-line, thereby providing a reasonable defense of Maryland waters.

In August 1813, the Navy Department approved the plan, and Barney was appointed Commander of the fleet, which was dubbed the Chesapeake Flotilla. Barney was assigned eight barges being built in Baltimore, the sloop *Scorpion*, gunboats *Nos. 134* and *138*, the row galley *Vigilant*, and three barges built for the protection of Baltimore Harbor. Contracts were let to the "father" of the famed Baltimore clipper ship, Thomas Kemp, in Baltimore, and Thomas Spencer, in St. Michaels, Maryland, to construct

additional gunboats. Additional vessels were to be built at the Washington Navy Yard. The force was to be manned entirely by Marylanders, including both African-American freemen and slaves as well as whites.

On 24 May 1814, Barney sailed from Baltimore with a fleet of eighteen vessels to raid Tangier Island, the main British naval base in the Tidewater. On the morning of 1 June 1814, the Chesapeake Flotilla encountered superior enemy forces between the mouths of the Patuxent River and Potomac River. After a brief but spirited engagement known as the battle of Cedar Point, the Flotilla was forced to retire into the mouth of the Patuxent.

On 7 June, with the arrival of massive enemy naval reinforcements, Barney was obliged to retreat into the shallow fastness of St. Leonard's creek. Although on 8, 9, and 10 June, the Royal Navy dispatched wave after wave of gunboats, schooners, and barges armed with a new weapon of terror, the Congreve rocket, to destroy the Flotilla, Barney stood fast. The series of engagements was collectively known as the First Battle of St. Leonard's, and in each the British were soundly rebuffed. Unable to defeat the Americans in their lair, the British commenced a ruthless campaign of wanton destruction along the Patuxent watershed, as far north as the town of Lower Marlboro. Barney resolved on a breakout. On 26 June, he launched a brilliant pre-dawn attack, initiating the Second Battle of St. Leonard's, and succeeded in driving the British down river and permitting his own squadron to escape to the port of Benedict. Two slow gunboats and

several merchantmen were left behind and scuttled to prevent capture. Soon afterwards, the British reentered the creek and destroyed the river port of St. Leonard's Town. Barney soon retired further upriver to the port of Nottingham, which, for the next few months, would serve as the main American naval base for the defense of the upper Patuxent.

In early August, Vice Admiral Sir Charles Cochrane and Major General Robert Ross arrived on the river with nearly thirty Royal Navy men-of-war and an army of invasion, "Wellington's Invincibles," fresh from victory against the armies of Napoleon Bonaparte in Europe. Their objective was the capture and destruction of Washington, DC. Their route of entry was to be the Patuxent River — with the Flotillas as a pretext for moving up — and then overland to the capital.

On 19 August, the main invasion force landed at Benedict. Acting under direct orders of the Secretary of the Navy, Barney retreated upriver from Nottingham to Pig Point (modern Bristol). He was then instructed to scuttle his entire fleet to prevent capture, and proceed with his flotillamen to the defense of Washington.

As a large force of British armed war barges under Admiral Sir George Cockburn moved up to attack the Flotilla on the morning of 22 August, and routed Pig Point, they were astonished to see the orderly line of American ships extending upriver before them blowing up in quick succession. Sixteen of Barney's vessels sank into the mud of the Patuxent, along with fifteen merchantmen.

The story of the flotillamen did not end at Pig Point. Barney and his men provided the only appreciable resistance at the Battle of Bladensburg several days later, a heroic but futile stand

against overwhelming odds. On the Potomac River, in a dramatic fireboat assault, they assisted in driving away a superior enemy invasion force from the upper river. At the Battle of Fort McHenry, it was the flotillamen who bravely manned the Battery Babcock defenses and turned back a British night assault on the rear of the fort.

Within months of the destruction of the Flotilla, salvage activities were underway. Salvor John Weems recovered twenty-five cannon and such items as anchors, cable, ropes, stores, shot, and small arms. In mid-November 1814, Barney dispatched twenty-five flotillamen to the tow of Queen Anne's to salvage supplies from two small barges that had retreated to the

point on the Patuxent, but only rope, a few stores, and several anchors were recovered. In late June 1815, the few salvaged goods recovered were auctioned off at Baltimore. In the Patuxent, however, the remains of the Chesapeake Flotilla and the merchant fleet scuttled with it slipped ever deeper into the river silts.



In late 1977, the Calvert Marine Museum of Solomons, Maryland, and Nautical Archaeological Associates, Inc. of Upper Marlboro, Maryland, as part of the Patuxent River Submerged Cultural Resources Survey, began planning an organized effort to locate and examine the remains of the Chesapeake Flotilla.

The following spring, an intensive research project was initiated which resulted in the preliminary documentation of the Flotilla's history and the probable position in which a portion of its remains rested. In 1979, with a matching grant from the US Department of the Interior administered by the Maryland Historical Trust,

a very limited remote-sensing survey of the conjectured loss site areas was carried out utilizing a proton precession magnetometer.

On 26 June 1979, the 165th anniversary of the American victory on St. Leonard's Creek, a line of magnetometer hits was registered over a range nearly two miles in length. Examination by scuba divers at one such site revealed the tops of several frame members of a sunken vessel projecting up through the muddy river bottom. Only a single inconsequential item was retrieved — a battered turtle shell. The site was dubbed the Turtle Shell Wreck.

In 1980, an extensive month-long effort was planned to archaeologically excavate and survey a small but representative section of the Turtle Shell Wreck. A large, shallow-draft floating operations platform was assembled at Patuxent River Park to permit the excavation of a test pit to determine the lie of the wreck, its relative condition, and the depth below the river bottom sediments in which it lay. On 6 June, the wreck, lying beneath nearly five feet of silt, was finally reached. The construction of a large coffer dam was then undertaken to facilitate further excavation. Upon completion of this structure, a survey of approximately one third of the site was begun. It was soon discovered that approximately ninety percent of the vessel was — amazingly — intact.

A veritable treasure trove of artifactual material was also discovered in an excellent state of preservation owing to the oxygen-free environment beneath the river mud in which they had been immersed. Medical instruments, apothecary items, medicine bottles (some with medicines still inside), mixing bowls, pills, tiles, utensils, and even a tin-plated grog cup with the initials "CW" engraved on it by its owner, Caesar Wentworth, a cook, were recovered. A "Paul Revere" lantern, replete with wick, was recovered from the ship's intact stowage compartments. An empty munitions box was

found upside-down in the hold. Musket flints and carpentry tools, marine equipment and navigational gear, an oarsman's bench, a small swivel gun arm, a gunner's pick, a ship's leather pump valve, carpentry tools, marine equipment and navigational gear, an oarsman's bench, and a companion ladder were also among the scores of items recovered. All artifacts removed from the site were transferred to the museum's historic Lore Oyster House at Solomons, where a temporary conservation laboratory had been established.

The vessel proved to be a double-ended warship. Her bow section had been damaged by an explosion. Aft the bow, however, a series of sturdy bulkhead partitions saved the remainder of the ship from destruction.

An effort was made to record the site using standard photographic methods as well as a specialized high-resolution, low-light underwater video unit. Although the former effort proved in vain in the near zero visibility environment, the latter resulted in the first ever underwater pictures of a historic shipwreck in Maryland. After extensive research, it was determined that the Turtle Shell Wreck was Barney's flagship, the *USS Scorpion*.

The Chesapeake Flotilla Project has been designed to employ the latest advances in scientific technology and research, education, and exhibition methods to more fully document, evaluate, excavate, conserve, and interpret the



Destruction of the United States Chesapeake Flotilla, 22 August 1814.

extant remains of the US Chesapeake Flotilla. The project employs such innovative technologies as sub-sediment radar and ultrasonic mapping systems. Polysulfide castings of sections of an entire vessel are planned to facilitate dry land study of a ship's architectural features and for exhibition purposes. It is planned that for the first time in Maryland, students in classrooms and museum patrons alike will be able to monitor the exciting process of discovery and study through marine telepresence. Digitization of select research and archival data will be made available to scholars, students, and the public at large through cyberspace. This interdisciplinary, multi-institutional, and governmental effort will thoroughly document the Flotilla remains for research and management purposes while providing educational and exhibition benefits of great value to the citizens of Maryland and the nation. Moreover, through a proposed interrelated statewide network of 1812 tours, it will also provide both economic and educational enrichment for Maryland and all of its citizens.

The lead state program agency will be the Maryland Historical Trust, through its Maryland Maritime Archaeology Program (MMAP) and Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum (JPPM). The Sponsored Programs Office of the University of Baltimore will serve as project sponsor. It is expected that participating and/or cooperating governmental and institutional support will come from the US Navy and the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, the Maryland Historical Trust, the Maryland Historical Society, and numerous public and private organizations. Funding will be sought from federal, state, and private sources.

In March 1995, the Maryland Historical Trust awarded a grant to Donald Shomette, discoverer of the fleet, to work with all concerned parties to develop a detailed project design. A capital grant application for Phase I survey operations was submitted to the Maryland Historical Trust and approved in mid-1996. In December 1995, the US Navy began preliminary aerial remote sensing survey work on behalf of the project. The Maryland National Capital Park

and Planning Commission allocated \$75,000 as part of the Prince George's 1996 County Tri-Centennial Celebrations, to begin construction of a replica of one of the Flotilla's 50-foot war barges. In March 1996, an aerial infrared photographic survey of key areas in which the Flotilla remains are buried was carried out by Shomette. Organizational development and a Memorandum of Agreement between institutions participating in a statewide "War of 1812" Flotilla museum interpretive program and tour development project was also initiated. In April, a state-of-the-art magnetometer and side scan sonar survey of key sectors of the river was conducted with significant results. The first exhibits on findings to date, produced by the Maryland Historical Trust Exhibit Services Office, appeared in September 1996. Completion and full operation of the Maryland Archaeological Conservation (MAC) Laboratory at Jefferson Museum this year will allow for testing of all targets located during Phase I through 1999 and full scale archaeological excavations in 2000-2002.

Major exhibits and educational programs associated with the discoveries are expected to continue throughout the seven-year project and beyond. Educational opportunities will be provided for student interns in the fields of barge reconstruction, archaeological survey projects, and conservation science. Further opportunities will be available through computer and telecommunication access to Maryland museums and schools, and integration and enhancement of War of 1812-related attractions through the Maryland Tidewater. Six major thematic tour routes will be centered at two proposed project centers; Mount Calvert in Patuxent River Park, and Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum at Lusby. Interpretive centers, of which there will be at least six, include Fort McHenry National Monument and the Maryland Historical Society, both in Baltimore, the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum at St. Michael's, the St. Clement's Island Potomac River Museum in St. Mary's County, Calvert Marine Museum at Solomons Island, and the Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum. Combined visitation to these

institutions and sites is currently reported at over 1.8 million persons annually. Core centers will serve as the base for field activities and conservation, while interpretive centers will focus on regional education and historical interpretation, and will host or mount traveling exhibits. Additional exhibits are proposed for Bladensburg, Upper Marlboro, and other War of 1812 sites. All participants will share richly in the fruits of the archaeological discoveries.

For further information, contact: Maryland Historical Trust, Office of Archaeology, 100 Community Place, Crownsville, MD 21032, tel. (410) 267-8532. For information on public events and exhibits, contact: Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, Exhibit Services Program, 10515 Mackall Road, St. Leonard MD 20685, tel. (410) 586-8530.

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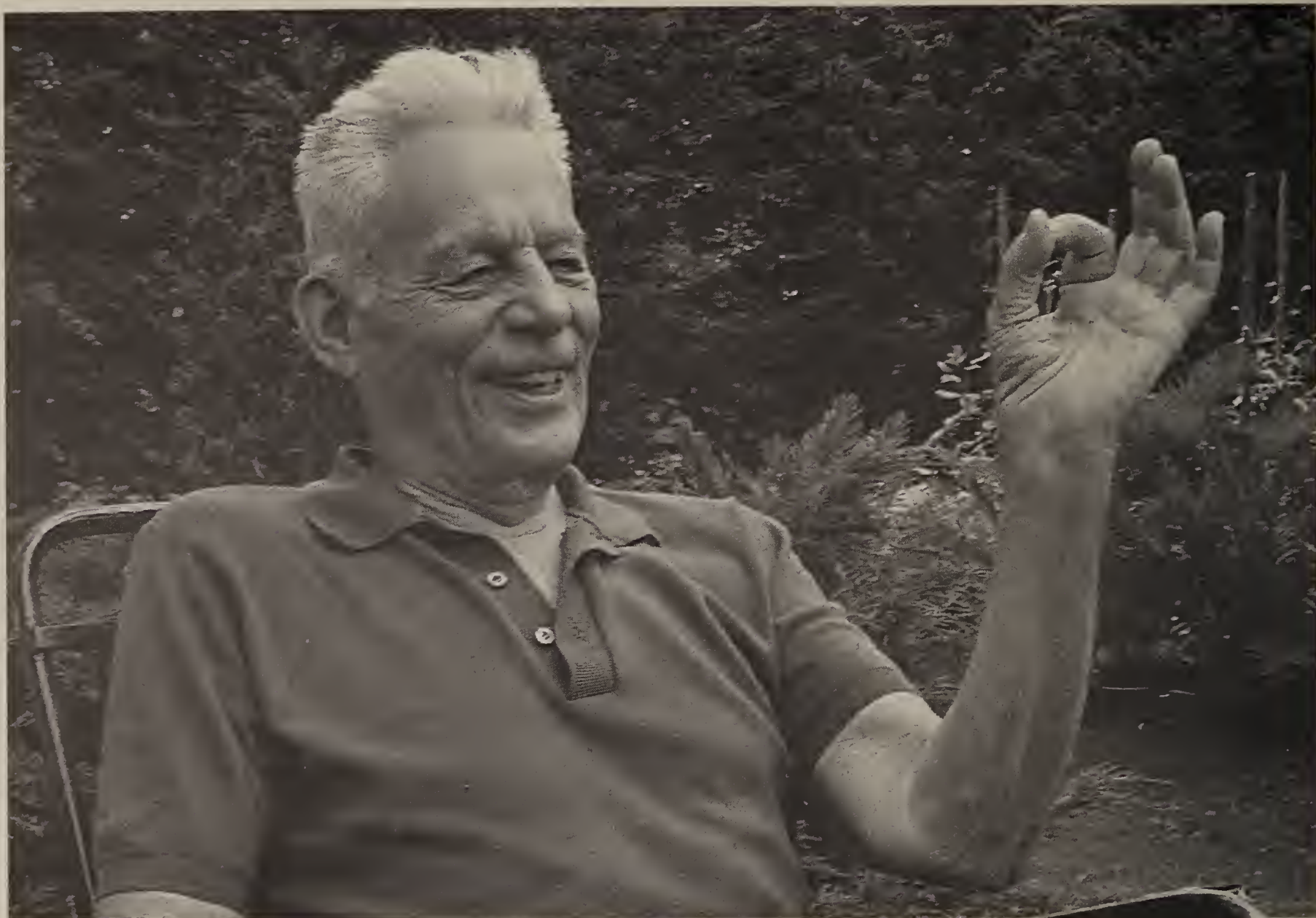
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264 pages, 25 illustrations, 6 maps, appendices, sources, index. 5½ x 8½. Cloth: ISBN 0-8061-2944-1, \$29.95. Paper: ISBN 0-8061-3002-4, \$14.95. Forthcoming, September 1997. Not for sale in Canada.

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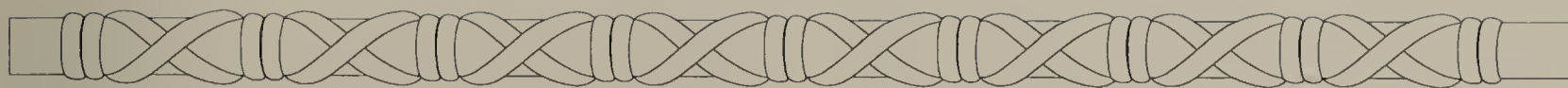
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Winners will be announced in Volume 58, No. 1 of *The American Neptune*. For a copy of the authors' guidelines, please contact the Publications Department, Peabody Essex Museum, East India Square, Salem, MA 01970-3783, call (508) 745-1876, ext. 3172, or E-mail dori_phillips@pem.org.



Book Reviews

F. B. CROCKETT, *Early Sea Painters 1660–1730* (Wappinger's Falls, NY: Antique Collectors' Club, 1996). 160 pages. ISBN 1-85149-230-5. \$49.95.

The traditional history of marine painting in Britain begins with the arrival of the Willem van de Veldes (father and son) from Holland in 1673 at the invitation of Charles II, following his restoration to the throne. Already mature and highly skilled artists, the two initiated what became the school of British marine painting, dominating it to such an extent that it is difficult to even think of the name of an English marine artist who worked during their lifetimes (Willem van de Velde the Younger died in 1707).

The first well-known native marine artist to emerge in the British tradition was Peter Monamy in the 1730s, followed closely by other renowned painters such as Charles Brooking, Dominic Serres, and John Cleveley, who defined and dominated the British marine school during the later eighteenth century. During the era between the Restoration and the rise of the well recognized British marine school, numerous other painters were producing marine art in the British Isles who up to now have received practically no recognition. Most of their extant works survive as either completely unattributed or else part of that vast assemblage of paintings called "follower of van de Velde."

F. B. Crockett focuses on this overlooked group in a concise but well-illustrated volume that represents the rest of three decades of research. The volume is divided into nine chapters. The first seven chapters are dedicated to individual artists (Isaac Sailmaker, Jacob Knyff, Jan van Beecq, Adrian van Diest, L. d. Man, H. and R. Vale, Lorenzo Castro), the eighth to artists who worked in the van de Velde studio (Johan van

der Hagen, Cornelis van de Velde), and the ninth to half a dozen painters about whom almost nothing is known. This final group of truly obscure artists is represented with a complete *oeuvre* of as few as two or three paintings each. Each chapter contains a biographical outline of the artists to the extent that it is known.

Most of this information is available elsewhere in the specialist literature; Crockett has not spent a great deal of effort expanding upon what little we know about their lives. His main contribution results from his years spent tracking these paintings at auction, in museums, and in private collections, where he has documented the location, composition, stylistic attributes, and subjects presented. Perhaps of most use to the connoisseur and collector is the section entitled *Characteristics of His Paintings*, in which he describes the attributes that most distinguish each of these artists. This section guides the reader's eye toward the carving, gilding, figures, or presentation of seawater that identify the individual hand of each artist, and further contributes insights that collectively characterize these artists as an active and extremely competent group.

Without doubt, this book is of most value as a visual record of these earliest English marine scenes. To that end, the sixty color plates and forty-seven black-and-white illustrations constitute the clearest presentation of these paintings available anywhere. Although the text is frequently punctuated with qualitative statements regarding the relative success of the works, the illustrations are of high enough quality to allow readers to make up their own minds.

DANIEL FINAMORE

Peabody Essex Museum
Salem, Massachusetts

EDWARD J. PHILLIPS, *The Founding of Russia's Navy: Peter the Great and the Azov Fleet, 1688–1714*. Contributions in Military Studies No. 59. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995). ix + 214 pages, appendices, glossary of ship types. ISBN 0-313-29520-4. \$55.00.

A significant part of Peter the Great's effort to update and transform the Russian military focused on the creation of a Russian fleet. One of the less studied aspects of Peter's naval endeavors was the early creation of a southern fleet, at Azov. It is the founding of this fleet and its role in Russia's developing ability to mobilize resources for such a project that forms the subject of this short and readable monograph. This book offers a number of valuable insights and a close view of the process by which Russia's first important naval contingent was formed.

The creation of the Azov fleet in Don River shipyards in the mid 1690s was part of a continuing endeavor to deal with the Crimean-Ottoman presence on the southern shores of Russia. After one effective attack on the Ottoman fortress, Peter's successful capture of Azov in 1696 fueled his enthusiasm for learning about the technology and, ultimately, the resource management involved in shipbuilding during his Great Embassy to western Europe. Dr. Phillips traces the introduction of new naval technologies and the piecemeal changes in the administrative and financial systems that supported the building of the southern navy. The creation of a Baltic fleet, which would justify itself in a victory against Sweden, did not lead to the disbanding of the southern navy. Instead, Phillips clearly shows that the navy continued to draw heavily on scarce labor, cash, and technological resources. It grew as a deterrent force along the southern coasts until it was sacrificed without a naval battle as a part of the settlements following the Russo-Turkish War of 1710–1711.

Dr. Phillips uses the categories of impetus, technology, and setting to examine his subject. While sometimes awkward, these designations do serve to emphasize the extraordinary resemblance between some the administrative and financial devices employed by Peter the Great and those of the preceding era. Even as Peter

succeeded in establishing a more "scientific" shipbuilding and creating the upper echelons of a revised administrative power, the Russian state recruited local labor by simply attaching one southern district's military population to the boatyards at Voronezh. Although Dr. Phillips does not make a point of it, this same population was similarly drafted to build supply boats at nearby Don River shipyards in the preceding generation. The monograph, a revised doctoral dissertation, is not based upon Russian archival research, but makes effective use of published primary sources and secondary materials. The appendices provide admirably specific tabulated information on the construction, staffing, and cost of the Azov fleet, and the text discusses pre-Petrine naval endeavors in considerable detail.

The book's emphasis on the Azov fleet and its significance to the development of the Petrine navy makes a contribution to our understanding of a key era in Russian military and naval history. Dr. Phillips is not explicitly interested in the current debate over the military revolution and the role of growing European navies, but his monograph contributes nonetheless to our understanding of that process in the Russian Empire.

CAROL B. STEVENS

Colgate University
Hamilton, New York

J. R. HILL, ED., *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Royal Navy* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). xvi + 480 pages, color and black-and-white illustrations, bibliography. ISBN 0-19-211675-4. \$49.95.

Naval histories of Great Britain and/or histories of the Royal Navy appear periodically: Sir William Laird Clowes in seven volumes, 1896–1903, reissued in 1971, and most recently by Naval Institute Press in 1996; David Hannah in two volumes, 1898–1909; G. W. Marcus in two of a projected four volumes, 1961–1971, not completed; single volume works by Michael Lewis in 1959 and 1962; and Paul M. Kennedy in 1976, 1982, and 1996; and N. A. M. Rodger in

an ambitious multi-volume project sponsored by the National Maritime Museum, forthcoming. The origin of British naval history is debatable. This one covered 1,200 years, beginning with the Anglo-Saxon period, 793 AD, the year Norsemen first threatened the British Isles. Within a century, King Alfred constructed some ships for defense, but he cannot be credited as a founder. The narrative continues, the last debate in chronology being 1994, the year the WRNS, women naval personnel, were absorbed into the Royal Navy.

The editors of this one-volume contribution to *The Oxford Illustrated History* series are J. R. Hill and Bryan Ranft, noted and prolific British naval historians. Essayists in the Clowes history included A. T. Mahan, Theodore Roosevelt, and Clement Markham. For this volume, fourteen accomplished British naval historians from Britain, the United States, and Australia, each contributed in his or her area of expertise. The product is slick and lavishly illustrated, including color photographs, with several two-page schematics, twenty-three maps, a nine-page chronology, and a sixteen-page annotated bibliography. There are no footnotes. Schematics include HMS *Victory*, HMS *Warrior*, and a Type-22 frigate of the 1990s. Naval administration (David Loades and Daniel Baugh), strategy (John Hattendorf and Eric Grove), and technology (Andrew Lambert, David K. Brown, and Norman Friedman) are discussed in most detail. The lower deck has adequate coverage. Little is devoted to logistics and the vast dockyard complex.

Susan Rose notes that in the twelfth century, the Cinque Port towns of the southeast furnished about sixty ships to the Crown on occasion. David Loades stresses how privateering and piracy were ambiguously linked to adventure and patriotism during the formative Elizabethan era. The Navy was neglected by the early Stuart monarchs, and they lost its support in the Civil War. For J. D. Davies, "Royal Navy" could legitimately describe the force under the later Stuarts, Charles II and James II. The role of that self-proclaimed savior, Samuel Pepys, has been exaggerated.

John Hattendorf writes of the classic age of

fighting sail in which the Navy was involved in seven major wars and achieved maritime hegemony. Daniel Baugh describes the "standing navy" (page 156) of the eighteenth century as a truly national institution. The nineteenth century, one of splendid isolation for the only world power, is covered by Andrew Lambert. David K. Brown praises the Admiralty for managing the industrial revolution with great skill and professionalism. Roger Morris describes the significant exploration, scientific developments, and hydrographic surveys that resulted in the charting of the world by the Royal Navy. Life on the lower deck and educational institutions for officers and ratings are the subjects of the essays by John Winton.

James Goldrick sorts out the complexities of the reforms of First Sea Lord Jacky Fisher related to financial exigencies, HMS *Dreadnought*, the vulnerable but cheap battle cruiser, and an inferior gun fire control system during the first decade of this century. Geoffrey Till for the interwar period dubs the Invergordon incident of 1931 "a respectful and respectable 'down tools'" (page 322). An extraordinary exploit of naval gunners of HMS *Suffolk* during the Allied Intervention in Russia in 1919 was commandeering an armored train which penetrated three thousand miles inland on the Trans-Siberian Railway. Eric Grove sees the performance of the Royal Navy during World War II as vindication after the general disappointments of World War I. Centralization of defense forces and adjustment to the status of "median power" (page 381) are the themes in the essay of the editor, J. R. Hill. Norman Friedman is particularly effective in explaining the technicalities and complexities of modern weapons systems.

This is one of the better histories of the Royal Navy. The format is attractive, the illustrations with accompanying informative explanations are supportive of the text, and the content reflects the latest and best scholarship. The price is reasonable.

EUGENE L. RASOR

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DONALD G. SHOMETTE, *Ghost Fleet of Mallows Bay and Other Tales of the Lost Chesapeake* (Centreville, MD: Tidewater, 1996). vii + 390 pages, illustrations, appendix, notes, index. 6½" x 9¼" cloth. ISBN 0-87033-480-8. \$29.95.

This book contains much more than its title suggests. Its content is far removed from ghostly tales of the lost Chesapeake and the ships of Mallows Bay.

The book is a trilogy: first, an account of the efforts to survey the wreck of the steamer *New Jersey* that sank in 1870 following her service in the Civil War; second, a history of the struggles of William Claiborne to maintain a Virginian identity against the claim of the Maryland Calverts to Kent Island, where artifacts were sought in underwater exploration in the 1990s; and, third, the identification and documentation conducted recently of the hulks of 174 wooden World War I freighters rotting in Mallows Bay off the Potomac River. More than a trilogy, the book is a survey of the technological world of contemporary underwater archaeology. It is a detailed concentration of historical reference data. Lastly, it is a tightly written narrative of the archaeological exploits of Donald Shomette and his associates, often under dire circumstances. It is a story, if the reader skims past the minutiae of detailed history and the catalog of repeated forays into the depths, of perseverance against the odds, of considerable fortitude. It pleads for public interest in underwater archaeological research and the allocation of needed resources.

Part One traces the history of the steamer *New Jersey* as one of the vessels so narrow-beamed (26' or less) that it could negotiate the locks of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, thus providing logistical support from the North for Federal troops holding the line in the Chesapeake against Confederate forces on the rim of the Bay. Acquired by the Old Bay Line, she shuttled between Baltimore and Norfolk. On the night of 25 February 1870, she burned to the water's edge off Poplar Island.

Beginning in 1974, interest in the wreck gained some momentum, despite wintry gales and lack of funds, with the identification of the

site and the recovery by divers of various artifacts. A dramatic break occurred when Shomette was invited to participate in the survey being conducted for the steamer *Kamloop*, lost and sunk in 1927 in a blizzard near Isle Royale, Lake Superior. The survey brought into use the most sophisticated equipment available to underwater search. By a quirk of circumstances, this equipment became the basis for continued work on the *New Jersey* project on the Chesapeake. The remainder of Part One is the presentation of the "state-of-the-art" technology, until the condition of the wreck and dwindling support left exploration of the site incomplete. Importantly, the work resulted in the passage of the Federal Revised Abandoned Shipwreck Act of 1987.

The text of Part One will interest those who reach for the latest step in underwater technology. It is replete with terms like AWOIS (Automated Wreck and Obstruction Information System), EG&G side-scan sonar-ROV (Remote Operating Vehicle), Pan-tilt Vintar UMC Sky-light Video Camera, Mark II Sea Rover, MVR-500 High-Resolution Electronic Imaging and Recording System, Mesotech Model 671 (Color Sector-Scanning Sonar Display Processor) and SHARPS (Sonic High-Accuracy Imaging and Positioning System). Invaluable to the technician, this material escapes the attention span of the average reader, except to highlight the state of the art in contemporary underwater exploration.

Part Two is an invaluable and detailed narrative of the struggles of William Claiborne, Colonial secretary of Virginia, to retain that colony's jurisdiction over Kent Island (now the eastern terminus of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge) against the charter of the Calverts for the establishment of the colony of Maryland which included the same island. He built his homestead on the southern shore. In tightly written detail, Shomette describes the steps leading to eventual military confrontation between Claiborne and the Marylanders.

Beginning in 1989, Shomette and his colleagues began to explore the shoreline of the southern portion of Kent Island, where erosion through the centuries had submerged the sites of Claiborne's occupation and his homestead.

Hampered by the wintry storms of the Chesapeake, they concentrated their efforts primarily on three barrel-wells lying beneath the surface. Hampered, also, by the lack of funding and support, they found their efforts (except for the recovery of artifacts that clearly identified the site in terms of its seventeenth century origins) drawing to a close. The substance of this section of the book, however, serves as an invaluable and detailed reference for students of colonial history. It serves, also, as a laboratory case of important archaeological research being neglected for lack of public support.

Part Three follows the title of the book. Mallows Bay, lying off the Potomac River some thirty miles below Washington, is the shrouded resting place of a great fleet of wooden ships. In an attempt to rebuild the merchant fleet of the United States in the wake of Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare in World War I, the government authorized the hasty construction of hundreds of cargo carriers built of wood. By the time these ships were ready for delivery, the war was over. What to do with the unneeded ships, speedily built with American ingenuity, then became a problem virtually refractory to settlement. Shomette delves in great detail into the plans for the ships' disposal, their removal to Mallows Bay, and their destruction; with the endless changes in administrative control and ownership of the adjacent but needed property; attempts to burn the hulks; and the arrival at the present state of affairs — nearly two hundred hulks lying in rows and resembling giant flowerpots, with trees and rampant vegetation competing with animals and insects to recreate the ecological habitat lost when the ships first arrived.

Donald Shomette and his archaeological cohorts began the exploration of the wrecks in the early 1990s, with the object of obtaining an archaeological inventory and documentation of the vessels for historical purposes. The work progressed in spite of the hazards presented by the wrecks themselves, the weather, competition from amateur trophy hunters, and the uncertainties of needed financial and logistical support. Nevertheless, by 1996 Shomette and his associates were able to document a total of 174 vessels

lying in Mallows Bay or adjacent waters. Their work was rewarded by the announcement of the state to designate the Fleet at Mallows Bay a Maryland State Historical Shipwreck Preserve. Today it is a remote wilderness of misshapen hulks nearly obscured in rampant growth, a testimony to the folly, genius, and greed of the men who created them.

Donald Shomette has written a book that is packed with archaeological data. It gives a hands-on look at the "state-of-the-art" in underwater exploration, with a depth of documentation and research that will provide a harvest for other students of history and archaeology, and with such a scope of history that buffs of the colonial era, the Civil War period, and World War I will have a field day in exploring it. He has created a good narrative that not only brings to life the work of the underwater archaeologist, but also portrays the needed fortitude and perseverance for the work.

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ROBERT LEE MARIL, *The Bay Shrimpers of Texas: Rural Fishermen in a Global Economy*. Rural America Series. (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas). 320 pages, 10 photographs, 1 map, bibliography, index. ISBN 0-7006-0703-X. \$35.00 cloth. \$17.95 paper.

E. PAUL DURRENBERGER, *Gulf Coast Soundings: People and Polity in the Mississippi Shrimp Industry*. Rural America Series. (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas). 170 pages, bibliography, index. ISBN 0-7006-07595. \$29.95 cloth. \$17.95 paper.

Early in American anthropology, the story goes, Franz Boas sent students into the field to practice salvage ethnography — the craft of describing folkways, material culture, rituals, beliefs, and kinship practices that were rapidly retreating from observation's reach. These two books about people who organize shrimping along the Mississippi and Texas coasts leave us

with a similar sense of witnessing a kind of death.

In the past two decades, US commercial fishing has suffered severe blows from environmentalists protecting marine mammals and turtles, real estate developers privatizing the coast, recreational fishing clubs demanding larger shares of marine life, foreign imports, and the damaging effects of pollution and coastal development on marine habitats. Both Robert Lee Maril and E. Paul Durrenberger have studied fishers before: Durrenberger in Iceland and Alabama, Maril in Texas among shrimpers who work the waters farther off shore than the bay shrimpers he portrays in this volume, and who have opposed bay shrimpers on several occasions. The two men obviously share visions about shrimping, yet they deal with the subject matter differently enough that these two books complement rather than compete with one another.

Maril's book is written for a more general audience, leisurely in tone in places, personal in others, and poetic in others. Describing the craft of shrimping, the community of shrimpers, and political economic developments that have begun criminalizing their livelihoods — bringing the reader aboard his prose — is Maril's particular forte, yet this book leaves us with more than an accurate description of bay shrimping. Maril manages to weave analysis into the text more subtly than most social scientists. He criticizes completely common assumptions of fishery managers, showing that shrimp imports explain declining incomes among shrimpers more accurately than Catch Per Unit of Effort (CPUE) data and making the point that the CPUE explanation, as with much social and economic analysis today, blames the victim by divorcing the practices of shrimpers from their broader political and economic contexts.

After showing how shrimpers become entangled in local politics and economies, chronicling the industry's social and technical history, Maril moves into an insightful discussion of their struggles against powerful recreational fishing interests who manipulate public opinion, state agencies, and fisheries science to criminalize commercial fishing and create images of shrimp-

ers as environmental rapists.

These discussions place shrimpers and their livelihoods into context without losing touch with their everyday lives. One chapter, written by Andrea Fisher Maril, highlights the experiences of women shrimpers — their struggles to manage domestic and professional workloads while convincing male shrimpers that they are more than support crew. Women's roles in shrimping have become ever more complex. Commonly, they enter the industry through the back door or public policy debates, becoming ensconced in political struggles and often serving as the vanguard of whatever political voice shrimpers achieve.

Toward the end of the volume, Maril gingerly steps around the issue of Vietnamese refugees entering the shrimping industry. It must be difficult for a sociologist with the sensitivity of Maril or an anthropologist as widely experienced as Durrenberger to listen while the men they engage in conversations promote ideologies of hate. Maril's account of the Vietnamese arrival in shrimping is a measured attempt to explain the myriad factors behind the facade of racism, including their unlucky arrival during a recession and their success at pleading ignorance of English and local customs while violating formal and informal rules. The Vietnamese make easy scapegoats for shrimpers weathering blows from several corners. The difficulties associated with their entry into the fishery, deriving ultimately from a war half a world away, provide Maril with the springboard to his final, general essay, linking the loss the bay shrimpers have suffered to forces well beyond their control. Maril seeks the reader's understanding in our experience with the loss of ways of life — farms, jobs, local merchants — to foreign competition and the growing specter of the rootless, opportunistic forms of capital that value natural resources and political allegiance only insofar as they facilitate profit, and value family and community even less.

For all his talk of global economics, Maril's book is most telling and most enjoyable on the decks of the shrimp vessels and in the social settings that gather together shrimpers' families. For more in depth analysis of the behaviors he so

eloquently describes, we need only turn to Durrenberger and Mississippi. Along with many of my colleagues, I have welcomed Durrenberger's critiques of commonly held assumptions of fishery social scientists, many of whom continue to find their explanatory concepts on the dusty shelves of economists and biologists in agencies such as the National Marine Fisheries Services and institutes such as Woods Hole and Scripps.

By contrast, Durrenberger's book comes out of an anthropological tradition that draws heavily on peasant studies. His analysis shows that although shrimpers' behaviors may seem irrational and strange to economists — particularly because they cling to their way of life even in the face of declining profits — they make sense in terms of household production strategies. His use of Chayanov and his detailed discussion of how a theory of household economy should guide data collecting and the organization of data for analysis is one of the hallmarks of this work.

Like Maril, Durrenberger labors to place shrimping into a broader context, describing the history of the industry, particularly the roles of unions and court decisions against shrimp organizations as violations of laws against price fixing, and discussing the shrimp processing sector's influence over discussions concerning work and its role in establishing the Vietnamese in the industry. His historical overview is important in challenging commonly held notions that shrimpers are too independent for collective bargaining, similar to the way his comparative analysis of the skipper effect as a folk model challenges many anthropologists' tendencies to accept theories of their informants rather than consider those theories objectively.

The chapter on folk models of shrimpers and fishers provides a sound introduction to his critique of the models of economists and biologists, revealing weaknesses in state and federal marine policies from which many lesser social scientists derive their conceptual tools. In this sense, the text should be welcomed not only by social science, but by the fishers and fishery managers who question current directions in marine policy.

To Durrenberger's credit, the depth and

insight of analysis do not distract from an exposition of shrimpers that is nearly as engrossing as Maril's, confirming much of the raw data that support his words to an appendix. His clear and easy diction and Maril's often lovely prose say almost as much about this fine young press and the editors of its Rural America Series as it does about the authors, containing the hope and promise of many interesting volumes to come.

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ROBERT BENNET FORBES, *Letters from China: The Canton-Boston Correspondence of Robert Bennet Forbes, 1838–1840*. Compiled, edited, and background essays by Phyllis Forbes Kerr (Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1996). 7¼" x 10¼", cloth, 317 pages, 36 illustrations of which 10 are in full color, bibliography, notes, index. ISBN 0-913372-77-3. \$39.95.

This well-conceived, artfully designed and illustrated book presents the letters in which Robert Bennet Forbes described for his bride the experience of his China voyage (11 June 1838–25 November 1840) as partner in the firm of Russell and Company. No detail of the journey, his emotions, or the mercantile, diplomatic, and social interactions in China escapes mention.

A "Foreword" and brief introductory essays provide a family history, overviews of the tea and opium trade, and a brief description of the larger collection of papers catalogued and micro-filmed by the Massachusetts Historical Society, of which these letters form a part. Forbes descended on his mother's side from the distinguished Perkins family, well-established in Boston society and in the China trade. He made his first voyage to China as a thirteen-year-old cabin boy on a Perkins vessel in 1817. Before long, he was an accomplished mariner and a successful merchant. The fortune he had made in the opium trade was lost soon after his return to Boston and his marriage to Rose Greene Smith. His financial distress and his brother's generous

offer of a position in China which would enable him to recoup his wealth led him to make the painful decision to absent himself from his wife and newborn son. There, he won the confidence of his peers as well as of the venerable Hong merchant, Houqua, and played a major role in trade and society during his brief stay. Not without reason, he considered himself as capable a mariner as the captains on his outbound and homeward voyages, for whom he substituted when the need arose. In the absence of a physician, he also provided medical care to those on board.

Forbes' letters were both a mechanism for coping with the separation from his wife and a vehicle for educating her to the intricacies of the trade to enable her to shape the flow of information to his associates at home. Their perspicacious descriptions of operations at Canton during the period immediately preceding the Opium War are comparable in value to Samuel Shaw's account of America's entry into the China trade. There is no description of the policy which governed Kerr's transcription of Forbes' letters, but the end result is a reader-friendly text.

Kerr discreetly employs notes to identify many of the characters mentioned, to define unfamiliar terms and clarify vague references. Following the letters, an "Aftermath" details Forbes' later career and continues the family history. It is followed by a brief bibliography, appendices containing several maps, an article on the opium trade published in the *Chinese Repository* by another American China trader, C. W. King, and Forbes' response. The reader could have been given more help with these, by far the heaviest reading in the book, but presented without introduction or annotation. At the very least, a cross reference to Forbes' comments to his wife on the exchange (page 213), not noted under his or King's name in the index, would have served as a reminder that Forbes believed his opponent wrote the piece in hopes it would improve his chance of being appointed consul.

The most serious complaint that might be raised is with the five-page index, which lacks care, imagination and sense. There are typographical errors ("indispensable," "Macoa"). Subject entries are distressingly few. Forbes'

dog, Flora, however, merits six subentries including "herds pigs on deck," and is implied to have played a major role on the voyage home (pages 238–264) — without benefit of *passim*. This is all the more distressing as the index provides little entrée for readers interested in topics such as family and social history, commerce, navigation, medicine, the fine arts and material culture, in all of which the text is rich. For example, one of the mechanisms employed to maintain contact with distant loved ones was portraiture. Paintings of loved ones were sent across the seas, displayed prominently, and evaluated by persons who had seen the subject more recently. The interested reader must, however, search the name index under each potential candidate for a "portrait" or "miniature" subentry, and is left to discover that bold-face page numbers indicate illustrations. A thoughtful index would have called more attention to this book's many unexpected treasures. Scholars in many disciplines will find material well worth their attention here, while casual readers will enjoy the letters of an absent husband eager to serve out his term in an exotic Asian environment for their human as well as for their historical value.

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CHESTER G. HEARN, *Admiral David Dixon Porter: The Civil War Years* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1996). xx + 376 pages, illustrations, maps, index. ISBN 1-55750-353-2. \$35.00.

David Dixon Porter, the US Navy's second admiral, was controversial in his day and remains enigmatic at best. He got on well with William T. Sherman, Alfred H. Terry, and U. S. Grant, who considered him one of the finest officers in the Union Navy, but he quarreled with

Nathaniel Banks and Benjamin Butler. If a man is to be known by his friends and enemies, this is certainly to his credit. Less praiseworthy is the way Porter "manipulated" Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles (page 70), appealed directly to President Abraham Lincoln without going "through channels," and regularly used his friendship with Assistant Secretary of the Navy Gustavus Fox to further his career. He was, in Chester Hearn's words, "probably the least conforming officer in the Navy" (page 133).

Porter made his name as a riverine commander. He commanded the gunboats which bombarded the forts below New Orleans in April 1862, thus helping to deal the Confederacy its greatest defeat in the first two years of the war. In 1863, he conducted joint operations with the Union Army around Vicksburg and commanded naval forces that narrowly escaped destruction on the Red River the following year. Transferred to the East, Porter saw action in the campaign against Fort Fisher near Wilmington, North Carolina, before moving to the James River to support Grant's drive against Richmond. In Hearn's assessment, Porter's chief asset was his ability to build (page 316). This judgment in the concluding chapter may be sound, but the basis for it is not well laid in preceding sections of the book.

Hearn draws upon his previous study, *The Capture of New Orleans* (1995), to begin his description of Porter's campaigns and carries on in fine fashion through the end of the war. This is descriptive history at its best, with some of the clearest narratives of naval operations available anywhere. It is surprising that Hearn does not include the interpretive assessments of individuals that so mark his book on New Orleans. In fact, he never does delve very deeply into Porter's persona. He identifies some of Porter's admirable characteristics, for example, his willingness to give credit to subordinates, and to some less worthy ones, including his jealousy of his foster brother, David G. Farragut, the Navy's first admiral. Porter's relations with his illustrious father, Captain David Porter, and with his wife and sons are only briefly explored.

In short, this is a fine narrative study of operations conducted by Porter during the Civil

War, but Porter, like fellow riverine commanders Andrew H. Foote and even David Farragut, still awaits a definitive biography.

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ANDREW DAVID, *The Voyage of HMS Herald to Australia and the Southwest Pacific 1852–1861 Under the Command of Captain Henry Mangles Denham* (Carlton, Victoria, Australia: Miegunyah Press of Melbourne University Press, 1995). xxvii + 521 pages, illustrations, maps, charts, appendices, bibliography, index. Cloth. ISBN 0-522-84390-5. Obtainable through Gazelle Book Services, Ltd., Falcon House, Queene Square, Lancaster LA1 1RN, UK. Tel. (0) 1524-68765. No price given.

In June 1852, the frigate *Herald* left England on a voyage to the southwest Pacific, east of New Caledonia. The purpose was to explore for trade routes between Australia and the west coast of America, identify shoals and other dangers to navigation, and survey harbors where supplies and other assistance might be obtained by whalers and merchants heading toward the then-expected railroad or canal across the Panamanian isthmus. The voyage was further motivated by the interest of the English colonial governments in Australia and New Zealand in better information about Fiji and Tonga, which were centers of increasing missionary and trading activity. Commanded by veteran naval surveyor Henry Mangles Denham, the expedition produced voluminous information for navigators of Pacific waters during its nine years and was the first to collect extensive data about magnetic variation with changes in latitude.

The *Herald* was accompanied by the steam paddleship *Torch*, a smaller vessel intended to assist with surveys in shallow waters. The tale of the *Torch* is strange, for after arriving in New South Wales, it was never able to rendezvous with the *Herald* for the intended Fiji cruises. Her commander, Lieutenant William Chimmo, was

invalided to England in 1855, and the vessel sold to private interests. The work thus devolved almost entirely upon Denham and the one hundred officers, seamen, and marines of the *Herald*.

Denham and his crew conducted three cruises to Fijian waters, one to southern and western Australia and three to the Coral Sea, returning each time to Sydney to adjust chronometers and resupply. In Fiji, they extended the work of the US Exploring Expedition in 1840 under Charles Wilkes by surveying and triangulating the smaller islands of the archipelago. Inevitably, they were drawn into the delicate balance between opposing island kingdoms, each allied in overlapping ways with French, American, and British missionaries and traders and their governments. Fijian culture had a powerful and sometimes morbid attraction to Westerners of the mid-nineteenth century, as the islands underwent transition from practices of warfare and cannibalism toward Christianization and accommodation with the West.

In 1857, the voyage was extended to assist the colonial governments in determining the best possible route through the Coral Sea for vessels traveling to India by way of northern Australia and the Torres Straits. This led Denham to make three cruises along the Great Barrier Reef, where he sounded for routes, surveyed reefs and islands, tried to prove or disprove the existence of numerous reported shoals and reefs, erected navigational aids, and identified possible sites for lighthouses. In between, he surveyed portions of the coast of southern and western Australia and Port Jackson (Sydney) and Moreton Bay (Brisbane).

One of the more interesting chapters depicts the assistance provided by the *Herald* in the transfer of the Pitcairn islanders to Norfolk Island. The community had outgrown the resources of Pitcairn in the years since they had settled there after the *Bounty* mutiny and were being moved by the British government to the former convict settlement in Norfolk, where they encountered plow agriculture and draft animals for the first time.

More than a hydrographic expedition, the *Herald* carried a scientific complement to collect information about the biological and geological

character of the lands visited. Naturalist John MacGillivray and botanist William Milne reported to Sir William Hooker, director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. After MacGillivray ran afoul of Captain Denham and was dismissed from the expedition in 1855, Milne tried to fill his shoes until he was discharged at Hooker's request in 1858. MacGillivray's departure allowed other officers to exercise their interest and skills in botany and zoology, notably assistant surgeon John D. Macdonald, who published some three dozen scientific articles about the work of the expedition. None of the others left journals as good as MacGillivray, whose accounts of his encounters with the natives of Fiji enliven the early chapters of the book. The expedition planted vegetables and trees brought from England and elsewhere on many of the islands they visited. It is ironic that even as the scientists were identifying and collecting the biodiversity of these islands for future use, the expedition was busy introducing exotic species that might threaten the native ones they were uncovering for science.

The book is graced with numerous color and black-and-white drawings and paintings of landscapes, portraits, and zoological specimens rendered by expedition artist James Glen Wilson. The *Herald* carried camera equipment, but unfortunately only one photograph is reproduced (facing page 29). In a book that traces the comings and goings of an expedition such as this, maps are essential, and Andrew David has provided seven (one of the Torres Strait would have been helpful). Nevertheless, the reader will want to keep a good atlas at hand, as there is no map giving an overview of the *Herald's* seven cruises.

This is a book for the serious enthusiasts of naval work under sail. Andrew David describes with precision the process of surveying and triangulation, and recounts the island-by-island progression in detail, with prodigious explanatory and supplementary information. He takes full advantage of his own lengthy career as a naval officer and later hydrographer in the British Ministry of Defence. The journals of Captain Denham and several of his officers are the principal source materials, supplemented

with correspondence and official records. More quotations directly from the primary sources would have given the full flavor of the times.

The thing I miss most in the book is insight into personalities. The historian is always captive to his sources, but I would have liked to know more about several incidents that Mr. David teases us with — such as MacGillivray's dismissal, Denham's relations with Lieutenant Chimmo, the references to Lieutenant Arthur Onslow's dissatisfaction with Denham, and Navy Hydrographer John Washington's reputed dissatisfaction with Denham's overall productivity on the voyage. The reader does not know whether more information about the human dynamics of the voyage was available or whether Mr. David chose not to report it.

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PAUL KEMP, *Underwater Warriors* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1996). 256 pages, illustrations, bibliography, index. ISBN 1-55750-857-7. \$32.95.

The British author of several books on ships and naval events, particularly of the World War II era — *Convoy!*, *Bismarck and Hood*, and *The T-Class Submarine*, for example — Paul Kemp has again provided naval enthusiasts with a dazzling array of nautical information, this time on a small undersea craft, the so-called midget submarine. His scope is considerable, from a corrective account of David Bushnell's one-man, hand operated *Turtle* and its improbable attack on HMS *Eagle* moored off Staten Island in September 1776, to brief and colorfully written accounts of various midget submarine operations in World War II. Indeed, midget submarines were used extensively in the 1939–1945 war, especially by the main Axis powers and by Great Britain on the Allied side.

The Italians were the first to be fully successful, and they were extremely innovative in both world wars. Work started in 1916 to modify a torpedo so that a driver and an assistant (sitting astride the craft and wearing diving suits) could guide the craft to a target ship, attach two 170-

kilogram TNT charges to the ship's hull by magnetic clamps, set a fuse, then clear the target area astride the remains of the rebuilt torpedo. The sinking of the Austro-Hungarian flagship *Viribus Unitis* by the *S1 (Mignatta)* shortly before the armistice was signed in 1918 was the most successful Italian midget submarine attack of the war. In the interwar period, the Italians developed additional midget submarines; the most successful was an improved version of the *Mignatta*, the *Maiale*. This craft was responsible for damaging two British battleships and nine supply ships, as well as sinking two merchantmen before Italy's withdrawal from the war in 1943.

Kemp is at his best in describing the design of British midget submarines and their operations in World War II. The most practical X-Craft was also the most successful. Of major strategic importance was the severe damage inflicted on the German battleship *Tirpitz* in Alta Fjord, Norway, by charges laid by the *X6* and *X7* in September 1943. Major repairs required some six months, near the end of which British aerial attacks caused more damage. Finally, near the end of 1944, this last modern battleship of the Third Reich was sunk in a massive British air raid while undergoing repair in another Norwegian fjord.

German-built midget submarines were first used in June 1944 in an attempt to interrupt Allied supply lines to the Normandy beachheads. They sank or damaged at least twenty-five Allied naval and supply ships in the last ten months of the war in Europe. However, Kemp's assessment was that "in many ways, the Germans' attitude mirrored that of the Japanese and was a tacit admission that their naval strategy had failed" (page 8).

The sections on Japanese midget submarines seem less satisfactory than Kemp's western discourse. He claims that the Japanese "had been pursuing the development of midget submarines since 1918" (page 66), yet, as he writes earlier, "in the early days of submarine warfare in this century, all submarines were midget craft" (page 7). The Japanese pursued the development of midget submarines long before 1918. Indeed, Japan purchased five Holland-type submarines

from the Electric Boat Company in Groton, Connecticut, in 1904. There are also various spelling errors in Japanese terms, for example, the "Yasukani" shrine is actually the Yasukuni shrine. Aside from such perhaps minor technical matters, there is nothing new offered about Japanese underwater warriors, either in terms of basic information or in terms of interpretation.

While *Underwater Warriors* is lucid, action-packed, and, in general, a worthwhile account, a more thoroughgoing analysis of the role of midget submarines in naval history from the pen of an experienced naval author would have made a greater contribution to the literature. A more extensive and up-to-date bibliography also would have strengthened this work.

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KEVIN SMITH, *Conflict Over Convoys: Anglo-American Logistics Diplomacy in the Second World War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996). 239 pages, appendices, tables. ISBN 0-521-49725-6. \$54.95.

Despite its catchy title, Kevin Smith's analysis of World War II Anglo-American shipping diplomacy is only peripherally a study of the Battle of the North Atlantic. Rather, logistics diplomacy is an analysis of "the Anglo-American battle for control of allocations of American-built merchant ships" (page 1), and how this struggle impacted the development of Allied strategy. "Glitzy wargames are...exciting," Smith acknowledges, "but the more mundane aspects of logistics win wars" (page 63).

From a diplomatic perspective, four "key facts" dominate Smith's work. First, Britain relied heavily upon American merchant ships to sustain its war effort. Second, despite this dependence, Britain's political and military leaders attempted to dominate strategic war planning. Third, Franklin D. Roosevelt, who possessed ultimate authority over the ships Britain desired, frequently bungled matters, and even hindered Allied Second Front preparations. Finally, the victory in the Battle of the Atlantic in 1943

marked the failure of Britain's diplomatic efforts to control logistical and strategic decision making; henceforth, such decisions were made by the United States. Smith's development and substantiation of these themes is impressive, and adds authoritatively to the growing body of literature critiquing Roosevelt's leadership style, analyzing the Second Front strategy, and documenting the transition of power from London to Washington during 1942-1943.

Conflict Over Convoys is also important for covering a reality woefully ignored for fifty years: the fact that in the conduct of the war, what the Allies could or could not do militarily was often dependent upon the availability or nonavailability of merchant shipping. This was most evident in the early stages of the war, when convoy delays, slow turnarounds, turnabouts and evasive routing, and long and hazardous voyages taxed transports severely, or when insufficient shipping became a major factor in the decision to postpone SLEDGEHAMMER, the cross-Channel invasion planned for 1942. Smith's work, more so than any other, documents how the special Anglo-American shipping relationship, despite many anxious moments, helped turn the tide of the war.

Smith also makes clear how important British records are for any analysis of the Anglo-American shipping relationship. Utterly dependant upon shipping for foreign exchange, and extremely wary of the enormous war shipping buildup taking place in the United States, the British kept a close eye on every American shipping move and recorded much about it. In contrast, American shipping logistics are less well documented and organized. In fact, the United States Maritime Commission and War Shipping Administration (WSA) were extremely slow in inaugurating a wartime maritime history project. Directly after the conflict, Congress, while continuing fiscal support for Army, Navy, and Air Force histories, cut off all funding for the story of the American Merchant Marine. Ultimately, only one volume covering American war shipbuilding was published privately in 1951 by Frederic Lane, but the study of US ship allocation, control, and strategy was abandoned. In recent years, attempts have been made to

resuscitate the subject. Robert Browder and Thomas Smith's chronicles of the life of Lewis Douglas, head of the WSA during 1942–1944, is the best of the lot. *Conflict Over Convoys* takes another big step towards filling the gap.

Still, more is to be expected. Smith, for example, covers well the internal conflict between the WSA and the US Army Services of Supply over control and allocation of merchant shipping, but ignores a similar, if less volatile, struggle with the US Navy. In addition, an examination of the Cunard shipping line papers located at the University of Liverpool would provide a valuable wartime perspective on British concerns over the shift toward American shipping dominance.

Kevin Smith also misses a good bet when he concludes that with the transfer of power from the British to the Americans at the end of 1943, "Anglo-American logistics negotiations henceforward consisted largely of administrative chores that were largely irrelevant to wider issues of strategy, diplomacy and power" (page 4). In truth, the relationship continued in vitally important ways to the end of the war and beyond. Just how the United States would use its new-found maritime strength absorbed the energies and concerns of both sides and helped shape postwar policy of considerable importance, including a unique Anglo-American postwar shipping partnership in the United Maritime Authority, the controversial disposition of Axis shipping at the Potsdam Conference, the formation of the International Maritime Consultative Organization, and the framing of the postwar uses of America's huge surplus of merchant vessels, many of which ultimately ended up in Britain's hands as a measure of the WSA and State Department's concern to restore to that nation its prewar maritime strength.

These observations, however, are not meant to detract from Smith's laborious and successful effort to unearth data on wartime shipping. Two decades ago, Martin Van Creveld, in *Supplying War: Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton*, remarked: "It is surprising that the vast majority of books on military history manage to pay lip service to [logistics] and yet avoid making a serious study of it. Hundreds of books on strat-

egy and tactics have been written for every one on logistics, and even the relatively few authors who have bothered to investigate this admittedly unexciting aspect of war have usually done so on the basis of a few preconceived ideas rather than on a careful examination of the evidence" (page 231). Kevin Smith has made an excellent start in addressing these concerns. Let us hope that he will now carry the story through to at least the end of the war. With his unexcelled grasp of Anglo-American shipping logistics through 1943, he seems a natural to do so.

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JAMES P. DELGADO, *Ghost Fleet: The Sunken Ships of Bikini Atoll* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996). 204 pages, 8 color plates, 85 photos, 12 maps and drawings, bibliography, index. Paper. ISBN 0-8248-1868-7. \$21.95.

CROSSROADS, the operation conducted at Bikini in 1946 to ascertain the effects of atomic bombs on naval vessels, was a milestone in maritime history. James P. Delgado was part of a team of National Park Service underwater archaeologists who, in 1989–1990, evaluated the ships sunk during CROSSROADS as possible diving attractions and as historical and archaeological sites. This book resulted from his research on CROSSROADS and fieldwork at Bikini. In chapters 1 through 5, he presents an overview of the planning and implementation of CROSSROADS, in 6 through 8 an account of his underwater activities, and in 9 an analysis of his findings.

The historical overview in the first five chapters is well organized and substantially accurate, although a few errors have crept in: e.g., the Fermi reactor contained about six tons of uranium, not 12,400 tons as Delgado states (page 8). In some statements such as "The ships...accumulated radiation on their hulls" (page 94), he conflates radiation with radioactive material. Such minor mistakes do not detract

from Delgado's achievement in encapsulating the complex history of CROSSROADS in an eminently readable form.

Most readers will probably find chapters 6 through 8, in which Delgado describes his fieldwork, to be the most interesting part of the book. It is certain that these chapters constitute a unique contribution to the CROSSROADS literature. Delgado's account of his dives on the sunken ships is fascinating. The photos and drawings, together with his description of the wrecks, allow the reader to visualize the condition of these vessels and thus gain some idea of the nature of the bombs that sent them to the bottom. By today's standards, the Able and Baker test bombs were puny, but, as Delgado observes, the twisted wreckage on the floor of Bikini's lagoon provides "a checkpoint where we can begin to comprehend what Able and Baker's progeny could now reap" (page 170).

Most of Delgado's analyses are contained in the last chapter. His analytical approach emphasizes the symbolic aspect of CROSSROADS. As an archaeologist, he regards the detritus of that operation as "artifacts that evoke basic messages of human behavior" (page 169). In using this symbolic approach, he is on firm ground in claiming that the sunken ships are evocative of "the ultimate horror of our society — nuclear destruction" (page 170). This claim stems from and is supported by evidence presented vividly in previous chapters.

Unfortunately, such evidence is lacking for some of the remaining claims resulting from his efforts to decode the "messages" conveyed by the artifacts. There are several such analyses in the book, of which the following is an illustrative example. The positions of most of the sunken ships reflect their placement during the tests. Despite the fact that contemporary government documents provide a plausible technical rationale for the placement geometry of the test ships, Delgado finds a hidden meaning in that geometry. The placement of the German-made *Prinz Eugen* near the periphery of the test zone and the Japanese-made *Nagato* near the center (where it was sure to be sunk) was, Delgado avers, "a racist act" (page 159). This claim is apparently based on the fact that the *Prinz Eugen* was a

product of white Europeans, whereas the *Nagato* was made by yellow-skinned Asians.

The problem with analyses of this type is that the link between artifacts and the aspects of the culture that they are alleged to symbolize is often tenuous to say the least. In the absence of a more general psychological or sociological theory of symbolism, it is thus incumbent on the analyst to provide unambiguous empirical evidence of that link; otherwise, it may be inferred that it is only the analyst's imagination that fills the space between the artifacts and their putative meanings. Delgado does not always provide such evidence; hence, these analyses are the weakest part of the book.

Nevertheless, despite its analytical shortcomings, the book provides an intriguing tour of a kind of underwater museum whose "exhibits" memorialize an important event in maritime history.

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THEODORE L. GACHEL, *At the Water's Edge: Defending Against the Modern Amphibious Assault* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1996). 281 pages, illustrations, maps, index, bibliography. ISBN 1-55750-3087. \$36.95.

Colonel Gatchel, a thirty-year US Marine veteran and amphibious warfare specialist, has done an admirable job in weaving into a coherent whole the experience of commanders on both sides of the high water line from 1915 through the 1982 Falklands conflict. Despite the book's subtitle, Gatchel does not skimp in analyzing the problems facing attacking combined-arms forces and commanders in offensive amphibious warfare. He does, as he promises, concentrate upon the command, control, and communications problems facing those charged with the difficult task of defending against attack from the sea.

Using the case study method, Gatchel examines the tactical and strategic situation from the unconventional perspective of the defender, describes his forces and command structure, logistics support and communications, as well as

those of his opponent, and then uses these cases to explain why modern amphibious landings have almost always been successful. In examining each case, he explores the three basic approaches to opposing a landing: naval defense, including the use of air power and mine warfare, defense at the water's edge, and mobile ground defense, particularly the employment of mobile reserve infantry and armor.

The first major modern attempt at an amphibious landing — Gallipoli — was a failure. The British aimed to capture the Bosphorus and force Turkey out of the war. Unable to gain more than a toehold on the Gallipoli Peninsula, they were eventually forced to withdraw in a skillful precursor to Dunkirk in the next war. It was the Allies (in particular, the US Marines) who studied the Gallipoli failure and, learning from it, devised the successful amphibious tactics of World War II, perfected in the Pacific, North Africa, Italy, Normandy, and southern France. Not surprisingly, it was also the US Marines, as Gatchel points out, who developed the first definitive doctrine for defense against amphibious landings.

Germany, whose generals held overall command at Gallipoli and the Dardanelles, seemed to have largely ignored these lessons. In Sicily and at Salerno in 1943, they tried and failed to mount a mobile defense against American and British Commonwealth amphibious landings. They again failed in western Europe, this time relying on the incomplete "Atlantic Wall" in a classic water's edge defense where loss of air superiority, woefully inadequate naval forces, and an ossified command structure ruled out other options.

Most penetrating and most fascinating for the non-specialist is Gatchel's exploration of the evolution of Japanese defensive tactics in World War II. At the outset of that conflict in the Southwest Pacific Area (the Guadalcanal, Solomons, Bougainville, and New Guinea campaigns, for example), Japan countered Allied attacks with a naval defense. Hobbled by a bifurcated command structure, with their fleet increasingly unable to cope with multi-pronged attacks from MacArthur, and with the loss of air superiority in the theater, Japan turned away from attempts to

destroy the US Fleet and began to explore tactical alternatives. These included counter landings adjacent to American beachheads and defense in depth, sometimes called "cave tactics." When these failed to produce favorable results, Japan reverted to a naval defense and sought (unsuccessfully) to destroy the US Fleet in surface action in the wake of the Leyte landings in the Philippines, while condemning isolated Japanese ground forces there to be overwhelmed.

Meanwhile, in the central Pacific, the Japanese were again modifying their anti-landing tactics. With US forces moving to within heavy bomber range of the home islands, Japan could no longer afford delaying tactics. In the battles for Saipan, Tinian, and Guam in the Marianas, Japanese defenders attempted to stop the invaders on the beaches. When this approach failed, they fell back upon the defense-in-depth as practiced at Peleiu, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa, buttressed in the latter campaigns by all-out suicidal air attacks which caused significant American casualties, but failed to stem the tide of defeat.

Gatchel completes his case studies with an examination of the Korean War Inchon landing and the British assault against the Argentine-occupied Falkland Islands. He then moves on to outline implications for future amphibious operations indicated by the changing mix of weapons systems, and to suggest the elements of a successful anti-landing defense which include minefields, aerial assaults with "smart bombs" against the invasion fleet, coordinated D-day attacks against the invasion fleet by submarines, fast-attack surface craft and underwater demolition teams, and massive attacks by major fleet units against landing support ships.

In all, however, Gatchel's conclusions tend to support Sir Walter Raleigh's assessment made at the time of the Spanish Armada, that defending against an amphibious operation is far more difficult than mounting one.

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JOHN GARDNER, *Wooden Boats to Build and Use* (Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1996. Published January 1997). 261 pages, plans, illustrations, photographs, index. Paper. ISBN 0-913372-78-1. \$29.95.

This is the last of five books written by John Gardner on how to build useful working replicas of classic American small boats. He passed away on 18 October 1995, having spent just short of ninety years pondering, building, and teaching about the small craft that aided our shoreside forefathers in making a living, and which provide wholesome recreation for us today. Listening to those who knew him well makes one who lacked that experience feel grossly deprived. There is no question that John Gardner has had the major responsibility for the amazing revival of interest in wooden boats in this country, if not all over the world.

Although generally familiar with John's earlier writings, largely those in the *Maine Coast Fisherman* and later in the *National Fisherman*, I found it necessary to carefully peruse all five of his earlier books before daring this review. Since his books alone present over one hundred designs, it would be natural to expect some repetition in the later volumes, and similarities are indeed found. However, this is always by way of illustrating a feature or variation that John felt was in need of further discussion. This, and the earlier books, should not be confused with the common how-to-do-story.

John was interested in more than just building boats. His writings are part of our nautical history. He was educated as a teacher of history before becoming a professional boat builder. It is obvious that he abhorred careless error and untruth. Like L. Francis Herreshoff, his early training had taught him to recognize fertilizer when he encountered it. However, his correction of another's effort, while convincingly persuasive, was never mean-spirited. I unwittingly participated in the controversy over origin of the Hampton Boat, discussed in chapter 7, by drawing plans from builder's models to illustrate the conclusions of Phelps Soule. The story was published in *The American Neptune* of April 1943, and it was used by John Gardner to con-

firm his own position. All of his books present archaeological records. Important bits of history pop out unexpectedly and sometimes dominate the scene. It seems probable that someone in the future will present John's construction methods, history, and philosophy in a separate book or books.

Chapter 1, "The Future of Wooden Boats," describes the expanding interest in these craft, and the roles of participating individuals and institutions. John makes himself clear on his opposition to the present trend toward converting a museum into an amusement park, to the detriment of its historic functions. Mystic Seaport seems to be successfully avoiding this, achieving a healthy balance between academic and popular activities. John cannot resist referring to the wooden boat movement as "partly a reaction against ill-designed, over-powered, over-priced fiberglass."

The boat designs represented might be divided roughly into three groups: primarily of archaeological interest, small manually or sail-propelled craft probably tested by John Gardner (construction well described in necessary detail), and larger self-propelled craft proven as work boats (not completely detailed, with optional changes suggested).

In the case of the third category, John sometimes suggests changes, including building in steel. John may have assumed that anyone undertaking to build a 37' boat would mathematically prove the effect of his proposed alterations, but the reader should be advised that many poorly performing freaks are afloat, or partly so, today as a result of designing by "assumption." The "Nineteenth Century Working Dory," Chapter 6, and the "Hampton Boat," Chapter 7, actually fall under the first two categories.

Chapter 8 describes the "13-Foot 7-Inch Swampscott Sailing Dory" known as "fat boat," John Gardner's last design. He was approaching the age of ninety, and he lavished his time on much detail and narration. A very interesting inclusion is his story of the famous Captain Joshua Slocum's 35' Chinese-rigged *Liberdade*, which he built and sailed with his wife and two sons from Brazil to South Carolina. "Fat Boat" would seem to be the ideal starter for a young

family.

The historic "Four-Oared Gigs *American Star* and *General Lafayette*" in Chapter 11 are beautifully drawn and their story occupies twenty-five fascinating pages.

Chapters 18, 19, and 20 are devoted to "Scale Half-Models," "Taking Off Boat Lines," and "On Building Small Old-Time Wooden Boats." These are very valuable, and combined with similar instructions found in John's other books, provide the education necessary to back up the title of "Boat Builders." John occasionally recommends the writings of other well known authorities, but none are more proficient than he.

Through the eyes of a naval architect, a weakness is seen in the lack of weight and hydrostatic data on the various designs. The weights of the boat represented offered no problem to their users, and discussion would have involved differences of materials, moisture content, and other complicating factors. Similarly, the hydrostatic characteristics had been proven satisfactory. As previously inferred, potential peril would lie in radical departure from the designs as presented.

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Shorter Notices

ANDREAS KUNZ AND JOHN ARMSTRONG, EDS., *Inland Navigation and Economic Development in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern 1995). x + 330 pages, index, bibliography. Paper. ISBN 3-8053-1730-1. DM 58.00. Contact publisher at Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Postfach 40 65, D-55030, Mainz, Germany.

The seventeen papers by as many authors in this collection draw on several conferences, but most particularly a workshop held at Mainz in 1993 on the whole question of the development of European inland waterways. Half deal with national studies and international comparisons, treating Britain, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Spain, Italy, and the several Danubian countries. Although the chronological periods vary, the bulk of the work focuses upon the nineteenth century. The second half of the work concentrates upon regional comparisons and local studies, with two chapters treating the Dutch economy and one each on the lower Seine, the Fenland coal trade, and a regional waterway in Schleswig-Holstein. Somewhat off the general theme, but still interesting, is a paper by Peter Lyth on the resumption of British coal exports through Hamburg just after World War I. Each chapter is fully footnoted, with brief summary paragraphs in French and German.

JÜRGEN MEYER, ED., *Oldenburger Schifffahrtschronik: Beiträge zur maritimen Geschichte von Brake und Elsfleth, 1870–1930* (Oldenburg, Germany: Isensee Verlag, 1996). 239 pages, illustrations. Paper. ISBN 3-89598-314-4. Contact publisher at Isensee Verlag, Haarenstrasse 20, 26122, Oldenburg, Germany.

Further proof that in Germany interest in her maritime past remains alive and well, this book chronicles the history of 231 "tall ships" built between 1809 and 1878 in the several ports of the state of Oldenburg in west Germany. As the title indicates, the focus is upon their subsequent career; indeed, the larger barks and ships were as likely to turn up in Port Adelaide or Iquique awaiting cargo of grain or guano as the ships of every other oceangoing nation. It is an impressive story, and the text (in German) is accompanied by numerous standard photographers' studies of ships and crews, gazing with much seriousness of purpose at the lens. Data on tonnage, masters, owners, and the like is provided in the appendix.



KEITH NEILSON AND ELIZABETH JANE ERRINGTON, EDS., *Navies and Global Defense: Theories and Strategies* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995). viii + 238 pages, index, select bibliography. ISBN 0-275-94898-6. \$55.00.

The twentieth military history symposium of the Royal Military College of Canada at Kingston was devoted to the theme noted in the title of this collection. The ten papers presented at that lively gathering are all included here. Donald Schurman leads off, as he did at the conference, with general remarks on imperial naval defense. Geoffrey Till and John Hattendorf comment, respectively, on theorists Julian Corbett and Alfred Thayer Mahan. Six papers treat comparative developments in the British and American navies: Andrew Lambert (1856–1914), David French (1914–1918), and G. A. H. Gordon (1918–1945) approach the question from the Royal Navy's perspective, while Kenneth Hagen (1889–1922), Nathan Miller (1822–1945), and Colin Gray (Cold War) offer the American view. Holger Herwig concludes with an essay on "the future of sea power." The volume, like the conference, demonstrates how successfully such a focused theme may be treated.

JOHN ARMSTRONG, ED., *Coastal and Short Sea Shipping* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996). xxiv + 177 pages. ISBN 1-85928-301-2. \$59.95.

GERALD CROMPTON, ED., *Canals and Inland Navigation* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996). xxii + 164 pages. ISBN 1-85928-346-2. \$59.95.

These two volumes collect articles appearing over the years in *The Journal of Transport History* from its inception in 1961 through 1992. Each focuses upon the subject indicated in the title, and all the selections deal only with British shipping. The coastal volume contains eleven articles by ten authors (editor John Armstrong has two), primarily relating to the nineteenth century and covering such subjects as the port of London, wages and profits during the Napoleonic wars, passenger traffic to Ireland, and development of various shipping firms and policies, and a few specific industries such as the copper ore trade. It concludes with Derek Aldcroft's remarks on the eclipse of British coastal shipping, 1913–1921. The canal collection, with a like number of studies, reaches a bit further afield. While it deals primarily with particular canals from the seventeenth century onwards, it also includes remarks on a few individuals (Josiah Wedgwood, James Green), and two pieces which dip into social history somewhat: W. Freer on standards of living among canal boat people, 1840–1939, and K. B. Sherwood on the boatmen's strike of 1923. One article by H. J. de Jong provides a bibliographical review of nineteenth century Dutch inland transport, the one exception to the British concentration. At this price, these volumes are mainly for specialists, but they do usefully collect interesting research, which has appeared over the nearly half-century life of this important journal. Both are obtainable from Ashgate Publishing, Old Post Road, Brookfield, VT 05036-9704.

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CORRECTION

In Volume 57, Number 1, book reviewer Edward S. Miller was erroneously credited as Edwin S. Miller. *The American Neptune* apologizes for the error and for any inconvenience it may have caused.



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